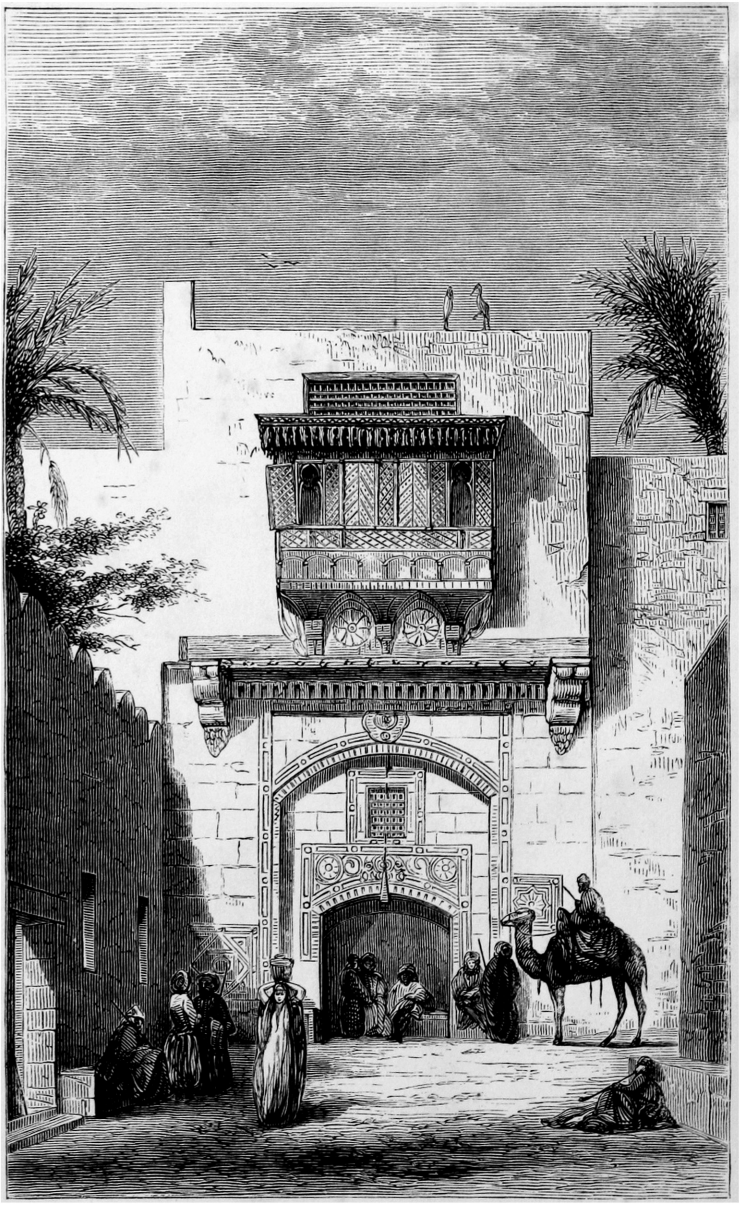




Gate of an Egyptian Governor.



An Arab Chief. (Gen. xvi., 12.)

BIBLE LANDS:

THEIR

MODERN CUSTOMS AND MANNERS

ILLUSTRATIVE OF SCRIPTURE.

BY THE

REV. HENRY J. VAN-LENNEP, D.D.

WITH MAPS AND WOODCUTS.

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INTRODUCTION.

EIGHTEEN hundred years ago the last page of the Holy Scriptures was penned. Since that time the lands of the Bible have passed through various vicissitudes, and been overrun and occupied by many strange nations. Yet it is acknowledged that in no other portion of the globe have traditions, customs, and even modes of thought, been preserved with greater fidelity and tenacity. This is the uniform testimony of all who visit the East. To use the language of one of the most gifted Oriental travelers of modern times: "The unchanged habits of the East render it a kind of living Pompeii. The outward appearances, which, in the case of the Greeks and Romans, we know only through art and writing, the marble, fresco, and parchment, in the case of the Jewish history we know through the forms of actual men, living and moving before us, wearing almost the same garb, speaking in almost the same language, and certainly with the same general turns of speech, and tone, and manners."* How important, then, to the Biblical scholar is the study of the modern East, not only of its antiquities, intensely interesting as they are, but of the manners and customs of its present inhabitants! The remarkable reproduction of Biblical life in the East of our day is an unanswerable argument for the authenticity of the sacred writings; they could not have been written in any other country, nor by any other people than Orientals. As a French writer justly remarks: "These customs, so unchanged; these manners, which have remained the same through the lapse of eighteen centuries, impart strength and vividness to our faith."† The minute and literal correctness of the foregoing testimonies will appear as we proceed in the present work, whose object is to throw such light as can be derived from the manners and customs of the modern inhabitants of Bible lands upon the social, religious, and political life of Bible times. Our subject is

* Stanley, "Jewish Church," i., 12.

† Léon Paul, 110.

not entirely new; many things have been mentioned by travelers and Orientalists. Some of these, however, were ignorant of the languages of the country they visited, and therefore unable to hold any intercourse with the people. Others only followed the beaten lines of travel, and therefore saw only the worst phases of human nature. Some visited but a small part of the field, though perhaps the most important; their views and statements are apt to be one-sided, and too sweeping. Others have failed to get at the homes of the people, have learned things only by hearsay, or have viewed every object through the lens of prejudice, sometimes too favorable, but oftener unjust. We make no claim to immunity from fault, but having spent almost a lifetime in the East, and enjoyed unrivaled opportunities of intercourse with all classes of the people, we have no such excuse to plead if we fail to furnish our readers with reliable and comprehensive information upon the topic of our choice.

Let it not be supposed, however, that our object is the mere gratification of a laudable curiosity respecting the interesting countries which have been the scene of Biblical history. We believe the customs of the modern East to be the only key that can unlock the sense of many a valuable text of Scripture and bring it to view. This has repeatedly been proved by experience, and a more thorough acquaintance with the East will doubtless multiply these valuable interpretations. We may, perhaps, not inaptly compare the Scriptures to a manuscript somewhat torn and defaced by the tooth of time; a well-preserved copy of a portion has come to hand, and may certainly be used in restoring the original. The Biblical style is often rendered obscure to us Occidentals by the omission of details quite needless to the Oriental mind; and we may surely supply this omission from the living picture of Eastern manners which a kind Providence has placed before us.

While studying the customs of the East, it has often seemed to us that many of them must be the necessary result of the climate and physical resources of the country, and have therefore been adopted by every nation and race that has successively peopled the land. We have, therefore, in the first part of the present work, undertaken to point out whatever characterizes or serves to explain the physical condition and natural productions of Bible lands, and to describe the customs to which they have given birth, never losing sight of the parallel contained in the pages of Holy Writ, and noting any changes that may have oc-

curred since they were penned. But let the reader bear in mind that we are not writing a treatise on the geography, botany, or natural history of the lands of the Bible. Many valuable works have already appeared on these and kindred subjects, and the general reader will find all the information he needs in an encyclopedia or Bible dictionary. We merely propose to throw light upon the Scriptures by tracing such a picture of Bible lands as lies before the mind of an intelligent Oriental; so that we shall omit much interesting matter of a scientific character, because it has no particular bearing upon our subject.

In every nation, however, usages are found which can not be explained or accounted for by a reference to the physical character of the country. These customs have an historical original, lost and forgotten, perhaps, in the lapse of time, but still maintaining its sway over the minds and manners of those who have inherited them. The fact that the customs now prevalent in Bible lands are so different from those of the West, and yet essentially identical with the ancient manners of the East, is of the greatest practical importance to the Biblical student. The Hebrew commonwealth has perished; its people are scattered among all the nations of the earth, whose manners they have adopted. The principal clue, therefore, to what they once were, and our chief means of explaining much that is obscure in Holy Writ, will be found in the customs of the modern East. And we propose, in the second part of the present work, to consider all such details of Oriental life as appear to have, in the main, an historical origin.

A few words of explanation must be added before we proceed to our subject. We have felt considerable hesitation as to the use of some words improperly called Oriental, and of the incorrect spelling of others that are really so, simply lest we should lay ourselves open to the charge of pedantry. It has, however, seemed to us that in such a book as this we could plead neither ignorance nor a bad habit. We have, therefore, written Mohammed, instead of Mahomet; Bedawy (plural, Bedawin), instead of Bedouin; and mosk, instead of mosque. On the other hand, we have not called the religion of Mohammed Mohammedanism, but Islam, its universal name in the East (not *Islamism*, nor the *religion* of Islam); and his followers not Mohammedans, but, as they call themselves, Muslims (not Mussulmans; Muslimin is the plural of Muslim.

We have not interfered, however, with words which have

harmlessly become incorporated in the English language—such as Sultan, Koran, Mecca, etc., which some write Sooltân, Kurân, and Mekkeh.

There are almost as many systems of spelling Oriental words as prominent writers upon the East. Compelled to make a choice, the following method has been adopted as most easy and natural to English-speaking peoples:

Vowels.

a always broad, as in *father.*
e as in *met, set, fell.*
i " " *sit, mill.*
o " " *bone, roll.*
u like the French *u* in *ruse.* Hard for English-speaking lips.
eu " " " *eu* " *jeu* " " " " "
u " *u* in *but.*
oo as in *room.*

Consonants.

g always hard, as in *gap, get, give.*
gh like the Greek *γ* and Parisian *r.*
j as the latter part of the English *j*, which is really composed of two sounds, i. e., *d* and *j*. It is like *s* in *measure.*
h is a slight aspirate, and *kh* a stronger one.
ch as in *cheap.*
sh " " *sheep.*
dh " hard *th* in *this.*
th " soft *th* in *things.*

In order to prevent misapprehension, we have generally placed an *h* after a final *a* or *e*, where it would be unnecessary were our system always kept in mind.

The chapters on the Physical Geography and Ethnology of Bible lands have been read and approved by my friend, Professor Guyot, of Princeton, to whom I was already indebted for the most valuable suggestions they contain. It is as needless to point out the value thus conferred upon those portions of the work, as it is to inform the public of the immense erudition of the learned professor, which is equaled only by the enthusiasm for the study of nature with which he inoculates all who come in contact with him or his works.

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ETHNOLOGICAL MAP OF BIBLE LANDS ..... *faces Part II.*

PART I.

CUSTOMS WHICH HAVE THEIR ORIGIN IN THE PHYSICAL FEATURES OF BIBLE LANDS.



Harper & Brothers, New York.

Endicott & Co. Lith. 57 Beekman St. N.Y.

THE

BIBLE CUSTOMS OF BIBLE LANDS.

CHAPTER I.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LANDS OF THE BIBLE IN GENERAL, AND OF PALESTINE IN PARTICULAR.

NO study of the East can be thorough and satisfactory which is not based upon the knowledge of its geography, or, in other words, its physical features. Our first step, therefore, in these interesting investigations must be to call the reader's attention to our "Physical Map of Bible Lands," and to guide him in the study of its most important features.

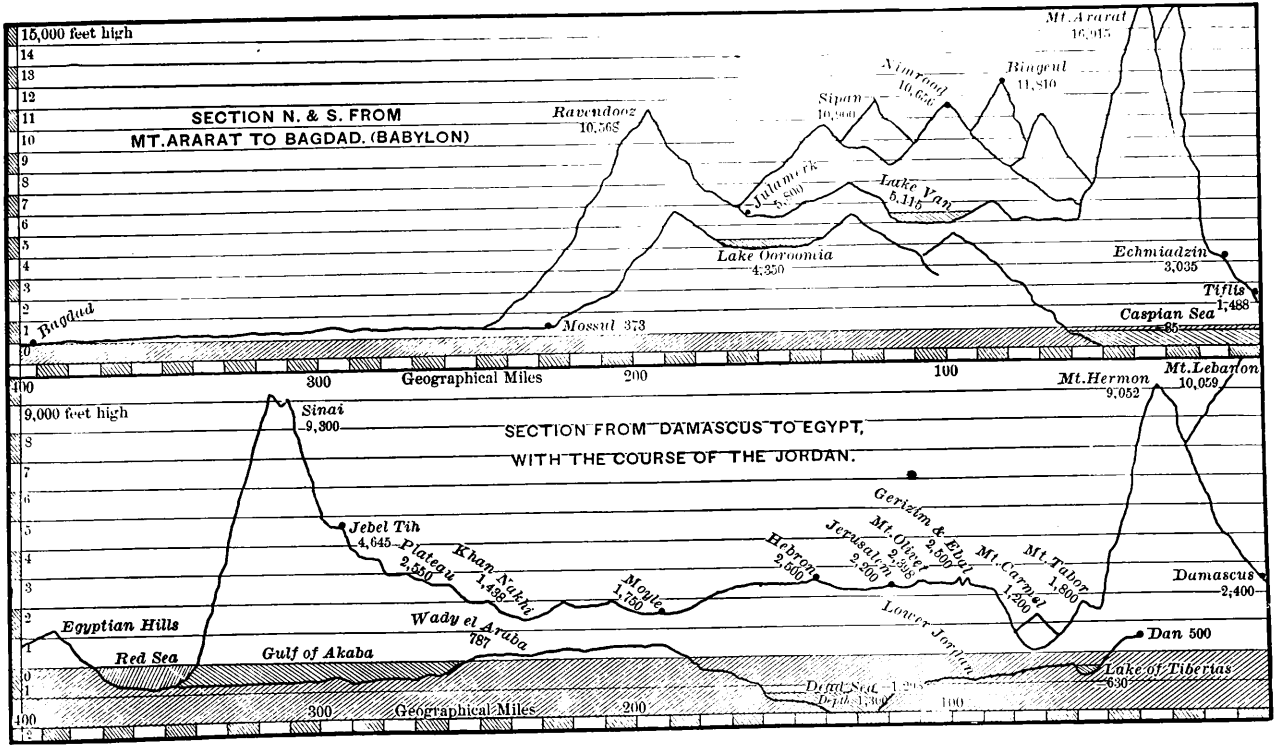
The land portion of this map, it will be observed, is colored with three different tints—green, red, and white—indicating three different degrees of elevation above the level of the sea. The *green* represents the alluvial lands, which do not exceed 1000 feet in height; the *red* indicates an elevation of 1000 to 8000 feet; and the *white* every thing above the last-mentioned height, necessarily comprising only lofty mountains and mountain ranges.

The first peculiarity that arrests our attention in the study of the map is the comparative isolation of this region of country from the rest of the world. It lies, indeed, in the very centre of the Eastern hemisphere, in the heart of three continents; yet it is bounded and surrounded by no less than five seas, which, during the early ages of our race, must have served the purpose of so many ditches, or *fosses*, around a castle, while the comparatively narrow spaces which separate them form rugged defenses of the cradle of the human race. But let us examine more particularly these encircling natural barriers.

The "stormy Euxine," or Black Sea, nearly destitute of har-

bors on its southern and eastern coasts, occupies the north-west corner, and the Caspian, a low marshy lake, lying eighty-five feet below sea-level, and always neglected of men, bounds the land on the north-east. Between these two seas stretches the great wall of the Caucasian range, rising at Mount Elboorz to a height of 18,500 feet, and covered in many parts with perpetual snow. It can be crossed only at the "Iron Gate," through the defile of Dariel, in the centre, and at the two extremities. The Persian Gulf occupies the south-eastern corner of the map, while the space between its shores and those of the Caspian Sea is blocked up by the lofty ranges of Zaghros and Demawend, and further guarded by the deserts of Iran. From the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea, whose navigation has ever been unsafe, lies the great Arabian Desert—dry, sandy, practicable only for the hardy Arab, and forming a plateau averaging 2000 feet in height. The Isthmus of Suez, on the south-west, is but a hundred miles in width, and consists of a sandy tract broken only by a salt-water marsh. Lastly, the broad Mediterranean spreads out upon the west and passes on to the Ægean, thickly studded with rocky islands, and thence to the Propontis and the Euxine. Here we have a series of defensive moats, as it were: these are the straits of the Dardanelles and those of the Bosphorus; and there is yet a third at the entrance to the Sea of Azof, which is now called the Straits of Kertch. Thus we see that the spot selected by Divine Providence for the birth of our race, and the earliest experiments of human life and society, was isolated yet central—isolated, that the experiments might be less liable to disturbance, and central, that hence the world might be peopled, civilized, and Christianized.

But we must point out another feature illustrated by our map. The figures which mark the exact elevations of the land above the sea indicate that there is a plateau, averaging about 4000 feet in height, and varying from 150 to 300 miles in width, which runs almost exactly east and west, though at its eastern end it is deflected toward the south by the Caspian Sea. On the west it comprises the whole peninsula of Asia Minor; in the centre, Koordistan and Armenia; and eastward the kingdom of Persia. This plateau, however, has not a uniform level surface, but presents a great variety of forms, from the lofty


15,000 feet high
14
13
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
SECTION N. & S. FROM
MT. ARARAT TO BAGDAD. (BABYLON)
Mt. Ararat
16,915
Nimrood
10,662
Bingeul
11,810
Sipan
10,300
Ravendooz
10,565
Julamerk
8,500
Lake Van
5,115
Lake Ooroomia
4,350
Echmiadzin
3,035
Tiflis
1,488
Caspian Sea
85
Bagdad
Mossul 373
400
300
Geographical Miles
200
100
9,000 feet high
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
1
400
300
Geographical Miles
200
100
SECTION FROM DAMASCUS TO EGYPT,
WITH THE COURSE OF THE JORDAN.
Sinai
9,300
Jebel Tih
4,645
Plateau
2,550
Khan Nakhl
1,488
Moyle
1,750
Egyptian Hills
Red Sea
Gulf of Akaba
Wady el Araba
787
Hebron
2,500
Jerusalem
2,500
Gerizim & Ebal
2,500
Mt. Olivet
2,508
Mt. Carmel
1,200
Mt. Tabor
1,800
Mt. Hermon
9,052
Mt. Lebanon
10,059
Damascus
2,400
Lower Jordan
Dan 500
Lake of Tiberias
630
Dead Sea 1,293
Depth 1,300

peak and mountain to the fertile valley and fruitful plain. The average elevation of 4000 feet is that of the level ground, and not of the mountains; these are so lofty along the edges of the plateau as to make it appear higher than it really is. The culminating or highest part of this plateau consists of a plain, surrounded by a complete circle of mountains, beneath which it lies in its rich livery of green, with the Lake of Van occupying the centre, like a jewel in its casket. The surface of the lake is 5115 feet above the sea-level. From this region four great rivers flow to three of the neighboring seas: the Fazi to the Euxine, the Aras to the Caspian, and the Tigris and Euphrates to the Persian Gulf.* They all carry fertility to the lands through which they flow. Ancient traditions place the province of Eden in this highest portion of Armenia, anciently called Ararat; and it appears to furnish all the conditions of the Mosaic narrative. This also seems to have been the site of the Noachian deluge, whose waters were gradually drained off by the streams to the lower grounds. No trace now appears of such a cataclysm, nor could any be looked for. The accompanying vertical cut will give a clearer idea of this region; it extends from the valley of the Aras and Tiflis, on the right, to Bagdad, or Babylon, in Mesopotamia, on the left, and exhibits the positions of the lakes of Ooroomia and Van, and of Mount Ararat, Ravendooz, and some other peaks.

The plateau we have described contains every variety of climate and production to be found in the temperate zone. It even possesses its own deserts of sand or salt, as in Iran and the centre of Asia Minor.

We shall not speak of the steppes or of the alluvial lands which lie to the north of the great plateau, for they are scarcely alluded to in the Scriptures; but on the south there are two alluvial plains of great fertility, created by the rivers that still enrich them, which invite our attention. The one lies south of the great plateau, and under its shelter: it is watered by the Euphrates and the Tigris; and much of it lying between these rivers, it has received the name of Mesopotamia. It has been occupied at different periods by some of the most renowned dynasties, *i. e.*, those of Assyria and Chaldea in Scripture times;

* Gen. ii., 10–14.

while at a later period it has constituted the chief wealth of the Persian, Alexandrian, Parthian, and Saracen empires, until reduced to an almost unbroken desert by the iron heel of the Turk.

The other plain lies just within the limits of an adjacent continent. It is the land of the Pharaohs, the rich valley of the Nile, from five to fifty miles in width and five hundred and fifty in length, the site of one of the earliest and most wonderful seats of civilization, which has played no mean part in the Biblical drama.

Between Egypt and Mesopotamia lies the little land of Canaan, or Israel—Palestine, the chief scene of Bible history, and the most interesting spot on the face of the earth. To this we must now turn our attention, and consider some of its physical peculiarities.

The first thing likely to impress one, in looking at Palestine upon the map, is its small size. How strange that so diminutive a land should have played so important a part in the world's history! But this fact stands not alone. Greece, Switzerland, and Holland are also small, but have done great and memorable deeds. Some have doubted whether Palestine could support a population of three millions even in David's time, when its limits were the broadest, and it had become the *entrepôt* of the commerce of India.* Computing the surface of the land at 11,200 geographical square miles, we have an average of 267 souls to the square mile, whereas prosperous Great Britain has but 246. It should, however, be remembered that England possesses large tracts of unproductive soil belonging to a favored class. German Bohemia, though hilly, supports a population of 254 to the square mile, while the fertile alluvial plains of Belgium feed no less than 438. Modern China supports 288. There are no data by which we can estimate the present population of Palestine, but we are safe in saying that every country of Western Asia has greatly deteriorated in fertility during the last twelve centuries. Egypt, according to Herodotus, anciently contained seven millions of inhabitants; yet its present population is but two and a half millions.† Babylonia was once the most fertile spot upon the face of the

* 1 Chron. xxi., 5.

† Lane, i., 27–29.

earth. According to Strabo, barley produced three hundred fold; and Pliny states that there were two crops of wheat a year. This was accomplished by a system of irrigation which converted the entire plain between the two rivers, as well as the outer banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris below Nineveh, into a continuous garden, supporting a numerous population of well-to-do farmers and gardeners, the source and secret of the prosperity and power of the Assyrian and Babylonian empires.* But now this whole region is little more than a desert. The yearly incursions of the Arabs compel the inhabitants to seek the protection of the walled towns, whose governors more slowly, but as surely, rob them of their little all. The land lies uncultivated, and the canals are choked and obliterated. This explains the depopulation and ruin of all the countries bordering upon the desert. The Turkish Government purchases a truce from the Bedawy sheikhs by the payment of a yearly tribute; this, however, does not prevent private parties of marauders from scouring the country and carrying off every thing movable.

But we must look at some other features of the Land of Israel. The most interesting of these is the course of the Jordan, which flows through a deep and most remarkable trench, extending in a straight line from the foot of Mount Hermon to the Gulf of Akaba, on the Red Sea. The vertical section of Palestine, from north to south, and across the Red Sea to the African hills, will throw light upon this subject. The Jordan bursts forth from the side of Hermon, 1700 feet above the Mediterranean, though one of its springs is lower down, at the site of the ancient Dan. Its mouth, where it enters the Dead Sea, at a distance of 120 miles from its source, lies 1300 feet below the Mediterranean; so that the entire descent of this river, most appropriately called "the Descender," amounts to no less than 3000 feet! Two lakes lie in its path; the higher and smaller is Lake Merom, the modern Hooleh, all grown over with the papyrus reed.† The Jordan, issuing thence, rushes through a rocky chasm into the beautiful harp-shaped Lake of Chinnereth, or Gennesaret, twelve miles in length by six in breadth, whose surface is 630 feet lower than the sea, while its depth is in

* Rawlinson's Herodotus, i., 267.

† Macgregor, 306, Map.

some places no less than 200 feet; so that, were it drained of its waters, it would present a chasm 800 feet lower than the sea, and 3000 feet below the mountains of Naphthali, near its western shore. The Jordan descends 700 feet more before it reaches the Dead Sea, which lies 1300 feet below the Mediterranean, and about 4000 feet lower than Jerusalem.

The Dead Sea deserves its name. It resembles the crater of a volcano, partially filled up by a lake of bitter waters, whose level is but slightly raised by the "swellings of Jordan" in the spring season, and beneath whose surface lies a depth, in some places, of more than 1300 feet; so that the lowest part of the entire chasm lies 2600 feet below sea-level, and 5000 feet lower than the Mount of Olives, less than fifteen miles from its shores!

But the chasm ends not here. A narrow valley (Araba) extends in a straight line from the southern extremity of the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Akaba, and this valley nowhere rises higher than 787 feet above the sea. The entire distance from the foot of Hermon to the mouth of the Gulf of Akaba is 603 miles.

But what bearing has this description of the Jordan upon the Scripture history? Much, every way. The fact, however, to which we desire now to call attention is the following: The land of God's chosen people must occupy a central position in the then civilized portion of the world.* But the mighty empires which surrounded them would long ago have obliterated every vestige of a divine revelation had not the physical features of the land afforded, for many centuries, an effectual defense against all the foes of the Hebrews. It is a hilly country, easily guarded by footmen against the cavalry and chariots of Egypt and Assyria. The Jordan, fordable only in two places, formed, with its lakes, the strongest line of defense eastward. On the south and south-west lay the dry and thirsty desert defending the approaches from Egypt; while the Mediterranean offered no secure landing-place to an enemy from the west. The passes between the mountains and the sea on the north were defended by the ever-friendly Tyrians and Sidonians, and the entrance into Cœle-Syria, between Lebanon and Hermon, could easily be held by hardy mountaineers.

* Ezek. v., 5.

But the eastern approaches of the Land of Israel were not guarded by the Jordan alone; for the chief danger that threatened the commonwealth always lay in the direction of Mesopotamia. Two and a half tribes were posted on the other side of the Jordan, in a rugged and hilly region; and their occupation as herdsmen and shepherds fitted them to be a hardy vanguard, ever on the watch, and at the post of danger. Beyond these lay the great Arabian Desert, while the famous Lijah constituted a detached fort, an outpost almost impregnable to any foe. This consists of a "lava bed" of basalt—a dike or field of black rock, rising suddenly to a height of thirty feet, pear-shaped, twenty-two miles long by fourteen wide—made up of boulders thrown together in the utmost confusion, and surrounded by the verdure of the wilderness. Here were the sixty giant cities of Bashan, hewn out of the rock; they are still standing, as though vacated but yesterday.* Here was the stronghold of Og and his compeers, whence they waged war upon the surrounding region, and, in case of defeat, retreated to their almost impregnable fortress.† Hither Absalom fled and hid himself after the murder of his brother Amnon.‡ And to this day it is the asylum of outlaws and refugees from Turkish tyranny.

Let us now consider the general appearance of Palestine as it strikes the western traveler when he first sets his eyes upon it. It is broken up into mountains, hills, and valleys, while an almost unbroken plain extends along the sea-shore, and runs across from the sea to the Jordan valley. The mountains are sometimes lofty, as Lebanon and Hermon on the north, reaching nearly 10,000 feet in height. They are often barren and rocky, but there is evidence that the lesser heights at least were anciently terraced, and covered with plantations of vineyards, olive-trees, and cereals. A process has, however, been going on for many centuries, which has changed into naked and craggy heights the hills once covered with soil and verdure. The original soil was supported in its place by the roots of the trees and shrubs which grew upon them. These were gradually cut down, and the cultivated earth was then sustained by means of stone walls, forming the fruitful terraces

* Deut. iii., 4. † Numb. xxi., 33-35. ‡ 2 Sam. xiii., 28, 29, 37.

which still adorn Mount Lebanon. As the country was visited with long protracted wars, which destroyed a large portion of the population, these walls were neglected and gave way before the winter rains, which swept the soil into the plains beneath. At a certain period in history, powerful tribes of nomads began to roam over the land, and continue to this day. It is their practice to set fire to the shrubs and forests in the autumn, in order to insure a larger crop of grass for their flocks in the spring. Thus the soil is carried into the plains by the rains, while the hills are converted into rocky wastes. The springs of water are dried up, and the rain diminishes as the forests disappear. This ruinous process still goes on in Western Asia, and it would require centuries of a different course to repair the injury thus inflicted on the land. It is within the memory of men still living that the island of Syra in the Ægean was covered with forests: it has now become, in the manner described, a barren rock, with only one small spring of water. The people of Malta now import soil from Sicily for the raising of vegetables, while in the days of Paul it possessed trees and even forests.*

The foregoing statements explain the fulfillment of the curse pronounced by Moses against Israel, in case of disobedience: "The whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning—*it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein*, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim!"†

We have every reason to believe that, during the early historic times, Palestine was covered with primeval forests, as is still the case with many other parts of Western Asia. And during the period of the Old Testament narrative forests were certainly more common than now; groves crowned the summits of many hills, which were cut down by the divine command, because they had become the seats of idolatrous worship.‡ Such groves may yet be seen in other portions of Western Asia, and the people at the present day, especially the remnants of heathen tribes, associate with them ideas of superstitious reverence, and even perform religious rites around some venerated tree, or at the shrine of a reputed saint there

* Acts xxviii., 3, 8. † Deut. xxix., 23.

‡ Deut. vii., 5; xvi., 21; 2 Kings xviii., 4; xxiii., 14; 2 Chron. xiv., 3.

interred. The piles of sticks surrounding some of these trees are the offerings of superstition, and happy does the man esteem himself who can carry off a twig or a branch to be preserved as a talisman. The "wood of Ephraim," where Absalom lost his life, perished long ago. Carmel and Lebanon evidently once waved with forests, and the noble cedars, now limited to two or three small localities, must have been a common tree at a former age. Still we may presume that the general characteristics of the country have remained unchanged from the days of Joshua. We have the distinct features of plain and hill, the former smooth, and rich with the alluvial soil which has been washed down the latter; while the hills, being formed almost exclusively of limestone, are, by the industry of the inhabitants, covered with terraces supported by stone walls, which keep the loose soil from being carried away by the rains. The plains produce cereals, mostly wheat and barley. These are also grown on the hill-sides; but the chief products of the latter are the vine, the fig, the olive, mulberry, and other fruit-trees. The more inaccessible hills, and such of the low lands as can not be cultivated, are used as pasturing-grounds for sheep, goats, and larger cattle.*

It is worthy of note that in Western Asia no tree is planted or even allowed to grow, unless its fruit commends it to the care of man. Fuel being scarce, all other trees are cut down:† the poplar alone may be excepted, whose tall trunk is needed for house-building. It is still customary, however, to plant trees of various kinds by the graves of the dead, and no person would venture to cut them down.

Solitary trees also, not fruit-bearing, are left to grow on some spot where the weary traveler seeks the shelter of their shade, or slakes his thirst at a well or spring of water. These last are usually the oak, the platanus or plane tree, and the terebinth, all of which grow to a great size, and afford refreshing shade to a large company.

Such solitary and venerable trees are often seen on the outskirts or within the limits of villages; an extensive platform surrounds the trunk, the soil having been trodden hard by the feet of many generations. Here grave councils are held, and

* Psa. lxv., 13.

† Matt. vii., 19.

here also occur the chief festivities on the occasion of a marriage or other causes of rejoicing, the company being seated upon little mats or rugs, the musicians filling the air with the shrill sound of their instruments, and the dancers often circling the tree, as they hold each other's hands: here also funeral rites are performed. The reader will find many such trees referred to in the Bible, but we merely remind him of Abraham's tree, probably a terebinth, underneath whose shade the patriarch entertained the angels;* the oak which was by Shechem;† the oak under which was buried the nurse of Rebekah,‡ and the juniper-tree where Elijah was refreshed by the angel on his way to "Horeb, the mount of God."§

What we have now said of the general features of the country will serve to explain many statements, otherwise dark, which are met with in the Scriptures. All the houses were built—as they are still—of sun-dried bricks or of stone, whether hewn or united in the rough state with mud or mortar. Timber has now become even more scarce than anciently. From the want of beams and rafters which once supported the roofs the latter have to be arched, which peculiarity is strikingly seen in all large pictures of modern Jerusalem. It is a city of domes.

There was no such thing as a wooden house except for a king, and Solomon's house of forty-five cedar pillars, and cedar beams upon them,‖ must have been more wonderful to the people than if built of marble, not merely on account of the quality of the wood, but from its being built wholly of timber. Then, too, as has already been observed, fuel was and still is scarce.

We see also how it was that foreign conquerors could subdue the people of the plains, while the inhabitants of the hills successfully maintained their independence. The dreaded war-chariots could not climb the rocky, roadless steeps. With the advance of civilization good roads crossed the hills in every direction, and the cavalry of the Assyrian, the Babylonian, the Persian, the Macedonian, and the Roman invaders met with no resistance outside of the "fenced cities;" and a

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* Gen. xviii., 4. † Gen. xxxv., 4; Josh. xxiv., 25, 26.
‡ Gen. xxxv., 8 § 1 Kings xix., 4. ‖ 1 Kings vii., 2, 3.

four-wheeled *diligence* now regularly plies between Jaffa and Jerusalem.

The climate of Palestine is mild and salubrious. The want of forests renders it liable to occasional droughts, and this liability is doubtless enhanced by the near vicinity of regions where rain never falls, such as Arabia-Petræa and Upper Egypt. Showers come from the Mediterranean, while the steady rains follow the line of Hermon and Lebanon. Snow is a phenomenon of rare occurrence. It is, however, seen in winter, resting on both the above-mentioned heights, and is found in shaded spots in summer; while the heat of the latter season is tempered, especially in the hill country of Judea, by the rush of the atmosphere of the Mediterranean toward the seething caldron of the Dead Sea. But during the months of July and August, when the inundation of the Nile covers Egypt with water, a cool breeze prevails in Palestine from the south-west, which is only occasionally exchanged for the stifling siroccos blowing from the desert.

A word respecting the main features of the other lands of the Bible to which the reader's attention will be called in the course of the present work. Egypt, as already stated, is a portion of the valley of the Nile, extending five hundred and fifty miles southward from the shores of the Mediterranean. It is closed in on the west and east by arid sands and barren mountains, and owes its fertility to the yearly overflowings of the Nile. This river empties itself into the Mediterranean by several mouths, which encompass the most fertile portion of the land, in shape resembling an equilateral triangle, and called the Delta, or Lower Egypt. At Alexandria, on the sea-shore, there are forty days rain during the whole year; there are five days at Cairo above the Delta, and none at all at the first cataracts.

Syria may be called the continuation of Palestine. It occupies the upper or northern half of the eastern coast of the Mediterranean; its southern portion includes the northern part of the mountain ranges of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, with the plain of Damascus; then northward comes the plain of Antioch, branching off to the low shore of Seleucia in the west, and reaching out eastward to the desert; north of this is Mount Amanus and Mesopotamia.

Asia Minor is an irregular parallelogram, pushing out westward from the Asiatic continent. It is a part of the great plateau we have already described, whose edges are worn down by storms and streams, and have formed low, irregular, alluvial plains all around its margin. This plateau is crossed from west to east by two irregular chains of mountains, Taurus on the south, and Anti-taurus on the north, which advance eastward almost to the Caspian Sea; their eastern portion is called Koordistan and Armenia. Finally, the great Caucasian chain, stretching across from the Caspian to the Black Seas, forms an almost impenetrable barrier to the north.

The countries we have thus briefly outlined are doubtless the most interesting portions of the earth's surface. It would be difficult to say whether their scenery is most remarkable for its beauty, its grandeur, or its extraordinary variety. The climate is salubrious, and so temperate with respect to both heat and cold as to produce the most perfect intellectual and physical development of man, and even of the brute creation. It is, moreover, the portion of the world which has been longest occupied by the human race, and to which belong by far the fullest and the most startling pages of history. Its surface is everywhere studded with remains of the human industry of more than six thousand years. A wonderfully large number of races and nations have there sought immortality by their own works, or by destroying the works of others. The remains of cities, of temples, palaces, and fortifications are met with on every hand, each telling its own tale. In Egypt, imperishable granite speaks of races long gone by. There, as well as in Palestine and Lower Mesopotamia, "tells" or mounds of stupendous size, and built of brick by human hands, point to a history still farther back, which we are just beginning to decipher; while in Asia Minor, the most ancient Egyptian, Assyrian, and Grecian remains lie side by side with monuments and epitaphs in languages yet unknown, and with pyramids of sun-dried bricks, whose hidden treasures are yet to tell a tale of long gone ages.

To these interesting features we must add that which, to the Christian, is the most thrilling of all—the history of man's redemption was here enacted. Here patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and protomartyrs, lived, preached, and suffered, and more

than all, here dwelt the Son of God! These lands we have attempted to delineate; others have studied and sketched their ancient remains. They have identified almost every spot mentioned in history, sacred or profane, but they have taken little interest in the present condition of the lands of the Bible; and despising their present population, so dwarfish and degraded by the side of the giants of ancient days, they have determined to forget, and have certainly disregarded, alike their persons and their customs. We have traced a totally different path for ourselves. It is less startling to the imagination. But when the reader has perused these pages, we trust that their picture of the lands of the Bible as they now are, will have thrown much valuable light upon the pages of Holy Writ.

We can not, however, proceed in our plan without a few words on the Topography of the Old and New Testaments, which has reference not only to Palestine and Syria, but to several of the neighboring countries as well. The identification of the spots mentioned in the Scriptures has received much attention on the part of Biblical scholars during the last half-century, and the volumes written on this branch of knowledge form a valuable portion of our literature. No student of the Bible should be ignorant of the most important of these works; but it does not enter into our plan to attempt a discussion or investigation of these matters. As, however, the subject of topography is intimately related to an inquiry into the present condition of Bible lands, as illustrative of the text of Scripture, we can not avoid giving it a brief and general notice.

It is worthy of remark, in the first place, that the land of Palestine, with regard to whose location there never has been a doubt, was eminently adapted for the purposes which God had in view in choosing to himself a peculiar people, and making them the depository of a divine revelation. It is probable that no other spot could be found on the face of the earth equally well fitted for such an object. We must bear in mind that the whole world was devoted to idolatry, and that the chosen people of God would be constantly liable to lose the knowledge of the true God, and imitate the heathen rites of their neighbors; so that they must needs be isolated in their position. This isolation was further rendered necessary by the political condition of the world. During the centuries in

which the Jews occupied Palestine, many dynasties were rising around them by the destruction of their neighbors, and falling in their turn under the blows of a more powerful enemy. The prevailing policy consisted, in many cases, in razing the conquered cities to the ground, putting to the edge of the sword all who were able to bear arms, and carrying away the women and children into hopeless captivity. No one can look upon the map of Palestine, as we have shown, without being struck with its remarkably advantageous position, both for the purpose of isolation and for defense against an invading foe. And the strength of this position is abundantly proved by the history of the Israelites; for they were able to maintain their independence against the two most powerful monarchies of ancient times for the space of seven hundred years; the mighty armies of their enemies, like the locusts in numbers, repeatedly broke over the line of the Jordan, or through the southern desert, and, taking possession of the plain of Esdraelon, cut their little land in two; but they were soon ejected, and the Israelites regained their liberty. Finally, the first to give way were the two and a half tribes that occupied the outposts on the eastern border.* These were followed, only nineteen years later, by the remaining tribes of the kingdom of Israel, at the fall of Samaria, their capital. The mountains of Judea proved an internal fortress, which, after the rest of the country had been wasted, and the inhabitants had been removed, still held its own—though sometimes compelled to pay tribute to its mighty foes—for the space of one hundred and thirty-five years longer. Though conquered by Babylon, the southern kingdom was revived by Cyrus, and did not finally perish until nearly eight hundred years later than the rest of the country, and this under the strong arm of Rome, the mistress of the world.

We remark, again, upon the general subject of Biblical topography, that the Bible is a volume containing a large number of separate books, evidently written by different men, at different and often distant periods of time, extending over two thousand years. Scattered through these books are found descriptions, often minute, of various localities, of towns, villages,

* B.C. 740; 1 Chron. v., 26; comp. with Isa. ix., 1.

buildings, streets, hills, valleys, streams, wells, and other local objects not in the land of Palestine alone, but also in the neighboring countries. Men of talent and learning have for many years been engaged in verifying these statements and in identifying the spots thus described. The discoveries and identifications have been innumerable. Old walls have come to light, streams have been traced, monuments discovered, inscriptions deciphered, mountains, hills, and valleys have been identified, forming a mass of evidence truly wonderful and unprecedented, which has established beyond the shadow of a doubt the authenticity of the books of the Old and New Testaments.

These discoveries and identifications are still going on, and we have reason to believe that many are yet in store to reward the patient labor of the student of the Word. We have yet to learn that any one item of topographical information contained in the Scriptures has, on examination of the ground, proved at fault. We have not seen this fact brought forward as an argument to establish the authenticity of the Scriptures, yet it has always seemed to us one of the most complete and unanswerable, and one which ought to satisfy the mind of every caviler.

It is also worthy of note that these topographical inquiries are nearly always more or less connected with questions of history. In seeking, for instance, to identify a certain locality or certain ruins, we endeavor to decipher an inscription, either entire or fragmentary, which may have been brought to light. These inscriptions often contain the name of the town sought for, and then the evidence is complete; but other particulars come to light at the same time. The inscriptions before us are perhaps not all written in the same language or characters. The record may be either in Greek or in Latin, in Phœnician, hieroglyphic, or the cuneiform character; and this mere fact at once proves that the town in question was once in possession of the people whose written characters are before us—a historical fact frequently of great importance. Again, the characters or letters of a people have differed at different periods of their history, and a mere glance at an inscription will often enable one to form a correct judgment, respecting the period of the world's history to which it belongs. And, finally, the reading of the inscription will often bring to light important facts, or

the names of persons which may be identical with those mentioned in the sacred record. To the first of these categories belong the late important discoveries made at Jerusalem, in the foundations of the Temple area. Large blocks of stone have been found forming the very basis of the artificial platform of Mount Moriah, which have rude marks or characters upon them. Now these characters, upon examination, prove to be Phœnician, which were used by the Hebrews until the captivity, and are corroborative of the statements made,* viz., that Solomon "commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house; and Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew them." Solomon employed in the building of the Temple skillful artisans of that nation, as well as Jews, and both people used the same characters.

The late discovery of a monument east of the Dead Sea belongs to the other category of inscriptions above specified. The writing upon it not only proves that the country in which it was discovered was occupied by the people of Moab, but the occurrence of the name of the Moabite king, Mesha, enables us to identify him as the hero of the tragical story narrated in 2 Kings iii., 24–27.

Should we enter, however, upon an account of even the most notable instances of identification, we should be obliged to pass in review the remarkable discoveries made at Nineveh, and others scattered over all the surrounding region. We will only say that coins are even more frequently found than inscriptions among old ruins, and being composed of less perishable materials they are generally in a better state of preservation. They, moreover, contain information upon the very points we seek to elucidate, *i. e.*, the names of the reigning sovereigns, while the best preserved and most elaborate inscriptions often throw no light of any importance upon any subject whatever.

There is yet another mode of identification of which we can fortunately avail ourselves when all other resources fail us. Western Asia has been overrun by various conquerors, who have laid it waste, destroyed its cities, ruined its "pleasant places," and either put to the sword or carried into permanent

* 1 Kings v., 17, 18.

captivity the greatest part of its inhabitants. Many of their ancient rites and customs have been supplanted by others, and the very languages spoken by the aboriginal people have been all but lost, foreign languages being substituted in their stead. But in spite of all these changes, the names of towns, cities, rivers, mountains, and even smaller localities, have generally remained the same, their conquerors having adopted them from the conquered with such changes alone as are required by the genius of the language newly introduced. It is fortunate for the historian and the Biblical scholar that for the original languages of Syria and Palestine a cognate language has been substituted—the Arabic—the best able, on account of its affinity to them, to preserve unchanged the names of places in those interesting regions.

The common Oriental name of Jerusalem at the present day, given to no other city even by Muslims, is Elkoods—*the holy.* Now we find this to have been one of its favorite names, both in Old and New Testament times.* The Hebrew shekel (a silver coin worth seventy-five cents) bore the inscription "Jerusalem Kadusha," or *Jerusalem the Holy;* hence the name of the coin throughout the East was *Kadusha*, and Jerusalem was so called, and by the Greeks *Cadytis.*† We have another instance of this preservation of names in the case of Egypt, which is always called Misraïm in the Hebrew Scriptures, after the son of Ham. It is an interesting fact that in the Arabic, Turkish, and Persian, the only name of the land of the Pharaohs is Misir. Tyre was anciently called Zoor, and is now known in Syria by no other name than Soor. Palmyra is a Greek name for Tadmor, the ancient Hebrew and the modern Arabic name for the city of palms.‡ As Drs. Smith and Robinson were prosecuting their researches, they one day came, as they supposed, to the vicinity of the ancient Ajalon, and began to inquire of the native Arabs if they knew of such a place. At first they expressed entire ignorance, but soon after one of them suddenly awoke, exclaiming, "Ayalo! Ayalo!"—*here it is, close by us.* The Turks are not so correct; for example, whenever they find a word commencing with an S followed

* Neh. xi., 1, 18; Isa. xlviii., 2; lii., 1; Dan. ix., 24; and so likewise Matt. iv., 5; xxvii., 53; Rev. xxi., 2.

† Herodotus, i., 418; ii., 208, 334.

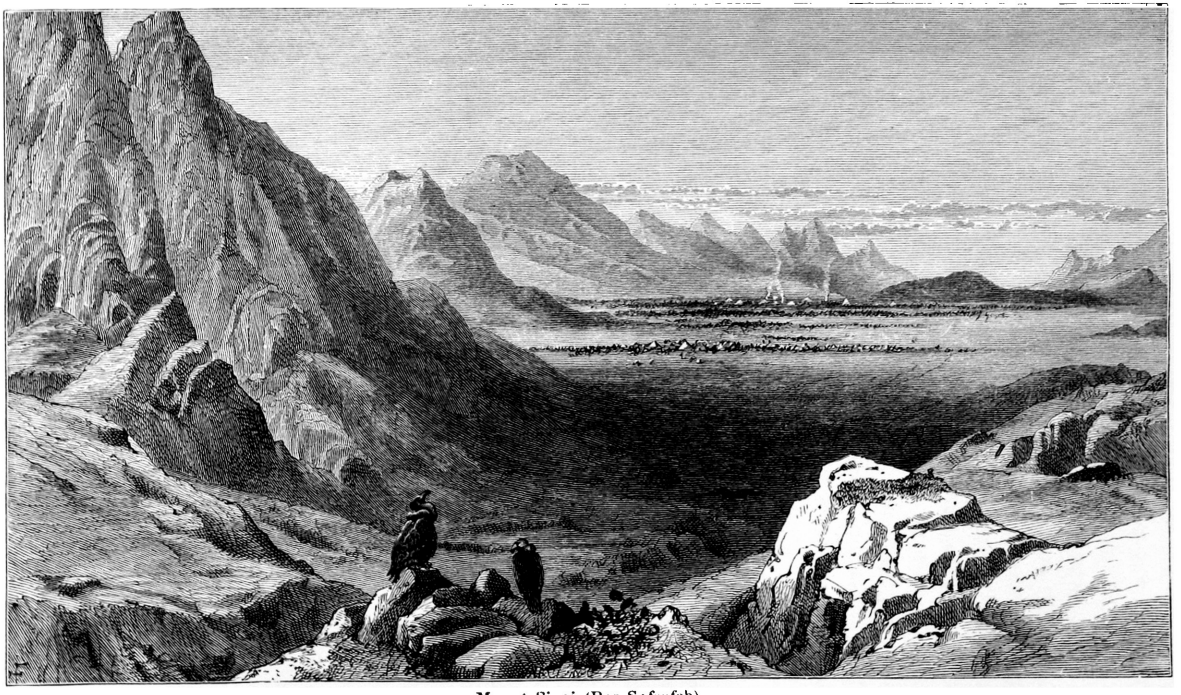
‡ 1 Kings ix., 18.

by a consonant, they prefix an I; thus they change Smyrna into Ismyr, Stavro into Istavro, etc. Sometimes they clip off the final syllable or syllables, and exchange a soft consonant for a hard one; as Pilibé for Philipopolis, and Edirne for Adrianopolis.

One of the circumstances which invests the study of Biblical topography with the highest importance, lies in the fact that a large class of passages in Holy Writ can not be understood, much less fully appreciated in all their power and beauty, without a conscientious examination of sites and localities. Some of the most vexed questions of sacred history have thus, fortunately, been settled forever, for they could be settled in no other manner: they will never come up again, for facts are stern arguments, and localities are among the toughest of facts. The Scriptures are now far better understood than they were before Christian scholars could be induced to leave their quiet studies and pursue their investigations upon the ground. It is thus that the impostures of the monks of the Middle Ages have been exposed, and that, to mention but one instance, the true site of our Lord's crucifixion and burial is being acknowledged to be not at the so-called "Church of the Sepulchre," but at the "Dome of the Rock." It is also by the study of the localities that the erroneous tradition of many ages has been corrected, and the true Sinai has been fully ascertained whereon the divine law was given to man. The spot is so well fitted for the grand and awful scene, that we wonder, on beholding it, or even on gazing upon the accompanying reproduction of a photograph, that a moment's doubt could dwell upon the mind. As we look upon the awful crags of the Ras Safsafeh, we can easily picture in our imaginations the whole sublime scene, the hundreds of thousands of Hebrews standing on that vast amphitheatre, while the Holy Mount burns, and smokes, and utters the divine law in peals of thunder. Before such ocular demonstrations, the cavils of unbelievers vanish like the mists of the night, and, "falling upon their faces, they worship God, and confess that he is in us of a truth."*

We must not forget, however, that the science of Biblical topography is yet comparatively in its infancy. "There is yet

* 1 Cor. xiv., 25; Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," pp. 39–44.



Mount Sinai (Ras Safsafeh).

much land to be possessed," both in Palestine and in the surrounding countries; and surely no study can be more attractive or interesting. We believe that many important historical questions will yet be solved, and that it will be done by this kind of investigation. Take, for instance, the question of the Deluge, and the original condition of the human race before that remarkable event occurred. There is a large class of good men and women who conscientiously think it a sort of heresy to suppose there was any limit to the extent of the flood-waters over the earth's surface, just as Galileo was esteemed a heretic for disbelieving that the sun made a daily flight of six hundred millions of miles round the earth. Other good men, however, with equal reverence for the Scriptures, think the flood to have been less extensive, and that the sacred narrative does not necessarily imply a flood that should encompass more than a certain district of the earth. They believe that Moses described the country of Eden—wherein the garden was planted—as it existed in his day, and that the supposition of a partial deluge extending over that portion of the earth alone which was inhabited by the race whose spiritual history forms the theme of the Bible narrative, answers all the conditions of the Mosaic account, while it sets aside some perplexing difficulties. Now this matter can probably be fully settled only by a careful topographical survey, and for our own part we have long desired to see it accomplished by conscientious and competent inquirers.

Finally, the study of the topography of the Scriptures is not only important because it elucidates them and proves their authenticity, but also because it has exerted a powerful influence upon the character and opinions of the people whose customs and habits now become so valuable as exponents of those of the ancient Hebrews. It is often said that the general characteristics of a country have a great influence in forming the character of its inhabitants, and we certainly see the fact strikingly exemplified when we contrast, for instance, the ancient people of Egypt with those of Greece. Besides this, most of the inhabitants of Western Asia are Orientals, and belong to the great family of which the Hebrews were members. The very language spoken in Syria and Palestine is cognate to that in which the Old Testament was originally written, and the

Arabs hold a near blood relationship to the Jews. Moreover, we must not forget the influence of local traditions, and the effect produced upon a people by having before their eyes, from generation to generation, from childhood to old age, the gradually crumbling ruins of some celebrated city or monument whose every stone tells a story intelligible to the most ignorant and supine. It is impossible to overrate the influence which the traditional history of Sinai has exerted upon the Arab mind, preparing it for the monotheistic faith of Islam, and even upon the mind of Mohammed himself and his immediate followers;* and the veneration still entertained by all classes for Jerusalem, called by Muslims "el Koods esh Sherif"—*the holy, the glorious*—can be traced to nothing else but traditional history.

* Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," p. 56.

CHAPTER II.

WATER, AND LIFE UPON THE WATER.

THE abundance or scarcity of water and its quality exert a greater influence upon the character of a people than is generally supposed. The fresh draughts enjoyed by the mountaineer on the very brink of perennial snows have an almost electrical effect upon him, while the muddy water used by the people of Mesopotamia and Egypt imparts to them sluggishness both of body and mind, and fits them to be the slaves of governors and kings.

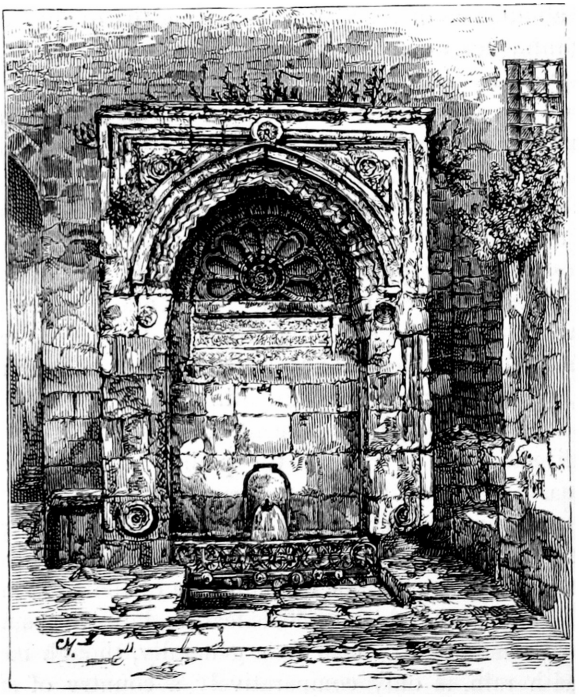
Almost the only perennial stream that flows through the land of Palestine is the Jordan, the "Descender," called by the Hebrews "the River," as is the Nile by the Egyptians. It starts from the cool slopes of Hermon, between Sidon and Damascus, widens on reaching Galilee into the Lake of Tiberias, and flows thence in rapid descent, dashing and twisting in every direction till it reaches the plain of Jericho and the Dead Sea. Nearly all the other streams of this land better deserve the name of winter torrents than of rivers. Springs here are not numerous, and often disappear in time of drought, owing to the lack of forests, the hardness of the rock, and the slight elevation of the hills.* This feature, however, is not peculiar to Palestine. Western Asia generally, though more favored with rain, is only comparatively a country of springs and rivers, with the exceptions of the high mountainous regions and a broad belt thickly wooded running all along the north side of the peninsula of Asia Minor, and extending from the shores of the Black Sea to a distance of twenty or thirty miles inland. Even Mesopotamia, which lies so near the lofty Koordish mountains, was in ancient times watered by artificial means.

This celebrated land became the rich and beautiful garden

* Hosea xiii., 15.

that it was by means of its many canals, which received their supply of water from the two great rivers, the Euphrates and the Tigris, distributing it all over the face of the country. These canals having at the present time fallen into decay, the country has of necessity again become a waste.

As might be expected, the existence of a valuable spring of water has often determined the site of a village or city. A



Public Fountain at Jerusalem. (Eccles. xii., 6.)

structure of mason-work, more or less costly or ornamental, has been erected to save the precious element from waste, and make it more accessible. The spot is often beautifully ornamented with shade-trees; a town grows up around it; and a woman from every family in the place comes, at least once in a day, with a jar on her shoulder, to obtain the needed supply for her household. This duty, however, is usually performed by the younger members of the family, the girls beginning early to accustom themselves to a task which has withal the attraction

of social gossip, while jar after jar is slowly filling from the trickling stream.*

The jars they use are of various forms, sometimes with handles and sometimes without; again with broad rounded bases, when they are carried upon a small circular cushion placed upon the head; or having almost pointed bases, which rest upon the cushioned shoulder, unless the bearer prefers to balance the vessel farther back, with its side pressing against the shoulder-blade. But it is a fact worthy of note that the forms of the modern water-jars are almost always a reproduction of the ancient article used in the same locality, but of coarser material and plainer style than the old. This is proved both by sculptures and by specimens occasionally brought to light among old ruins. The mode of carrying water is alluded to in the Scriptures.† The jar of water is brought home and set in the corner of the dwelling upon the earth, or on a stand specially prepared for it; by its side is placed an earthern cup or one of brazen ware or glass, according to the taste or wealth of the owner, for the common use of the household. This cup is often turned over so as to cover the mouth of the vessel, in order to prevent any thing from falling into it. Water for drinking, however, is usually kept in a smaller earthen jar or cruse, which is open at the top or perforated with small holes to pour in the water.‡ In the latter case it has a spout, as well as a handle, through which the fingers are passed when using it, while the thumb clasps the neck. The end of the spout is first applied to the mouth, and then gradually withdrawn to the distance of a



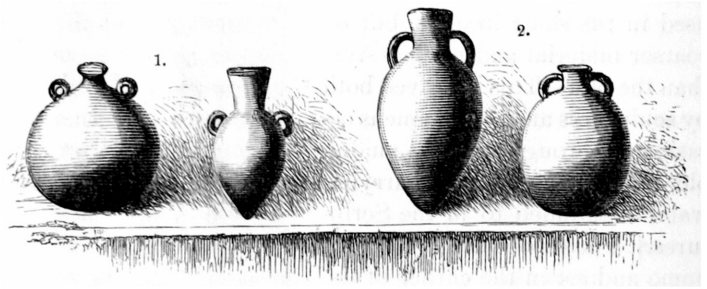
Woman carrying Water. (Gen. xxiv., 46.)

* 1 Sam. ix., 11.

† Gen. xxiv., 15; Mark xiv., 13.

‡ 1 Sam. xxvi., 11; 1 Kings xix., 6.

foot or so, the water all the while continuing to flow in a jet into the open mouth; it is then brought skillfully to its first position at the close of the draught.* It is not an unusual sight, however, to see a girl or a woman who is bringing her pitcher from the well or fountain take it down from her head or shoulder, and give some one to drink of it, which is uniformly done by resting the side of the jar upon one hand, while it is balanced at a proper angle with the other: he who drinks touches the pitcher only with his lips.† Nor is it considered improper for a man, though a stranger, to ask a woman to let down her pitcher and give him to drink.‡ As most Orientals like an occasional draught of water during the night, a cruse is usually placed so near the bed spread upon the floor that the



Ancient (1.) and Modern (2.) Water-pitchers. (Matt. xiii., 14.)

sleeper can reach it by merely raising his head from his pillow and stretching out his hand. Mothers are particularly careful to be provided with the means of giving a refreshing draught of water to their little ones when they wake up in the night. This habit evidently prevailed among the Hebrews, for we find distinct references to it in the Scriptures.§

Whenever a larger provision of water is needed, earthen jars of considerable size—sometimes of a capacity to contain twenty-five gallons—are ranged in rows and buried in the earth, filled with water and covered over the mouth with a flat stone, the porous texture of the jar keeping the water cool by evaporation. When the Jews were in possession of Palestine their

* The Spaniards have borrowed this custom from the Arabs.

† Gen. xxiv., 18. ‡ John iv., 7. § 1 Sam. xxvi., 11, 12; 1 Kings xix., 6.

frequent washings and purifyings doubtless compelled them thus to collect considerable quantities for religious purposes, and they must often have used such stone jars, or "water-pots," as are mentioned in the account of the marriage feast, where our Lord performed his "beginning of miracles" by changing water into wine.* We shall also, by-and-by, have occasion to remark that wine was, and is still, kept in similar jars.† Such jars are used, not for water and wine alone, but also to serve, as bins and barrels do in other lands, to store various kinds of provisions for the household, such as wheat, barley, flour, loaves of bread, oil, olives, dried vegetables, and fruits. Thus stored they are uninjured by the heat, and are safe from the depredations of the rats and mice.

But the fountain was not the gathering-place for youthful maidens only. It was doubtless also what it now is, the place where the clothes-washing of the whole village was carried on, this operation being performed in the open air. The matrons set a large kettle or boiler against an old wall or some huge rock, with small stones to steady it underneath, and after washing, spread the clothes to dry upon the surrounding shrubs. Should the village be of any considerable size, the curling smoke is seen rising by the fountain almost every day of the week. Hence this spot is often wholly monopolized by the female portion of the community. Even the passing traveler stops at a respectful distance, and, handing his little brass traveling-cup to some romping child who has followed its mother thither, slakes his thirst, and passes on.‡ Sometimes, however, the more provident and more generous villagers prefer to shelter their worthy dames from rain and sunshine while performing duties so indispensable to the general comfort. They put up a rude building, where, screened from the gaze of outsiders, their children can also enjoy occasional ablutions. We know two considerable cities which possess hot-water springs on their outskirts, where all the washing of the

* John ii., 6. In Cana "we saw large, massy stone water-pots, not preserved nor exhibited as relics, but lying about. From their appearance, and the number of them, it was quite evident that a practice of keeping water in large stone pots, each holding from eighteen to twenty-seven gallons, was once common in the country."—CLARK'S "Travels," p. 271.

† Jer. xxxv., 5.

‡ Job xxii., 7.

town is done. The spot is crowded all day long with women and children, so that men can visit it only at about sunset, when the women's work is finished and they are returning to their homes.

Mineral springs are abundant in Western Asia, and most of them formerly had protecting structures built over them, some of whose remains are yet standing. The Pool of Bethesda* was probably supplied with water from an intermittent spring, which also possessed mineral qualities. This characteristic in springs of ebbing and flowing is not at all uncommon. Bethesda is now dry, but the Pool of Siloam,† which is of the same nature, and was probably supplied from the same source, has an intermittent ebb and flow recurring every few minutes.‡ Near Beirut is a fountain of this kind, gushing forth from the foot of Lebanon in so copious a flow that its waters are utilized as a mill-stream to supply flour for the city; yet it is periodically dry for hours at a time.

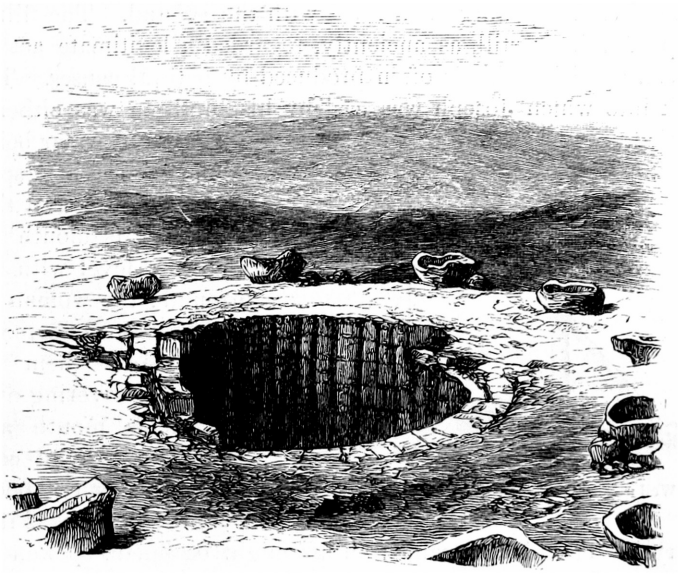
The insufficiency of water compelled men from the earliest times to supply their necessities by digging wells. Most of the springs being appropriated by towns and villages, and the best lands around them being under cultivation, the nomadic tribes, and all who occupied themselves with the raising of cattle, were driven to the wilderness, by which is meant, not the dry and grassless waste, but such portions of country as were not supplied with settled inhabitants. Here sheep were kept in the more grassy spots, while bushes and shrubs offered the best food for the flocks of goats and herds of larger cattle, including asses and camels.

These tracts of country were and are still poorly supplied with water. Wells were dug, therefore, which were considered a valuable possession, often being made objects of strife, and continuing in the hands of the stronger party.§ There are many such wells still existing, scattered over extensive tracts of the country, and they are sometimes, we have reason to believe, of great antiquity. Such, for instance, is the well near Shechem, called "Jacob's Well;"‖ such are the three wells of Beer-sheba, one of which is represented in the accompanying

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* John v., 2–4. † John ix., 7. ‡ Lynch, p. 421.
§ Gen. xxi., 25; xxvi., 20, 21. ‖ John iv., 12.

illustration, with its watering-troughs. The mouth of such a well is often covered with a large stone, requiring the strength of several men to drag it sufficiently aside to render the water accessible.* This having been effected, a jar or leathern bucket is let down by the shepherd or traveler by means of a rope, every one being obliged to supply himself with these conveniences.† In other cases there is a flight of stone steps by which

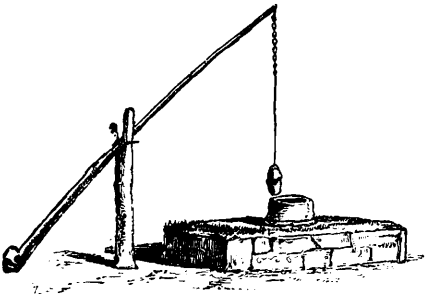


One of the Wells of Beer-sheba, with its Watering troughs. (Gen. xxvi., 32, 33.)

one descends to the mouth of the well.‡ Troughs of stone usually stand near the well, which are filled with water for the use of the flocks and herds.§ In some parts of Western Asia the wells are supplied with a long pole, balanced on the top of a perpendicular post; at one end of the pole is fastened a bucket with its chain, and at the other a weight is fixed to facilitate the raising of the bucket when filled.‖ There are many wells to be found which are now dried up. They occur both

* Gen. xxix., 3, 7, 8.
† John iv., 11.
‡ Gen. xxiv., 16.
§ Gen. xxiv., 20; Ex. ii., 16.
‖ This contrivance is used in Egypt for raising the water of the Nile, and is there called *shadoof*.

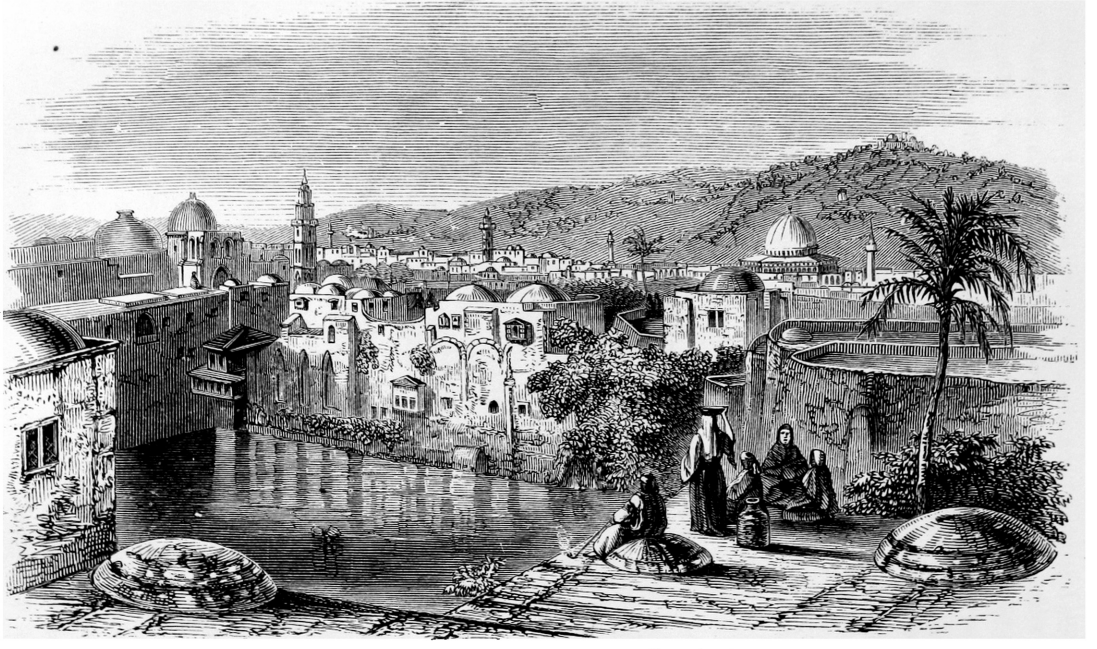
on the roadside, upon the track of the nomad tribes in their spring and autumn migrations, and among the ruins of towns and villages. The large stone perforated in the centre often still covers the mouth of the well, and the deep grooves worn by the bucket-rope in its sides attest the many refreshing draughts drunk here by man and beast of former generations, before the well became choked up with sand or soil. Sometimes the stone has been removed, and there remains only a treacherous opening on a level with the ground. The filling up of wells is still, as anciently, regarded a legitimate act of hostility;* but this is often produced by natural causes. The pit into which Joseph was cast by his brethren was either a dried-up well, or one which had been dug without water being found.† David's spies were hid in a well that was dry, its mouth being on a level with the ground: the woman of the house effectually concealed them by placing a covering over the well's mouth and spreading ground corn (the modern "boor-ghoor") thereon, as if to dry.‡ The pit into which an ass might be fallen, spoken of by our Lord,§ may have been a dried-up well of the ordinary kind, the larger well used for watering gardens, or a mortar pit covered with boards or branches.



Well at Thyatira, built of ancient Marbles. (Numb. xxiv., 7.)

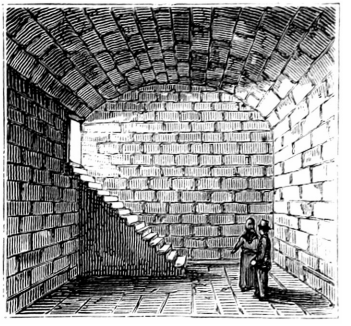
Cisterns also abound throughout the country. They are not confined to the cities and villages, where they are often built of solid masonry, but are often seen likewise in the most solitary part of the wilderness. These latter consist of a large tank more or less deep in the earth, built around with stonework, the walls rising several feet above ground and sometimes roofed. A door in one side of the structure leads down a flight of steps extending even to the bottom of the tank; so

* Gen. xxvi., 15; 2 Kings iii., 19, 25.
† Gen. xxxvii., 24.
‡ 2 Sam. xvii., 18, 19.
§ Luke xiv., 5.

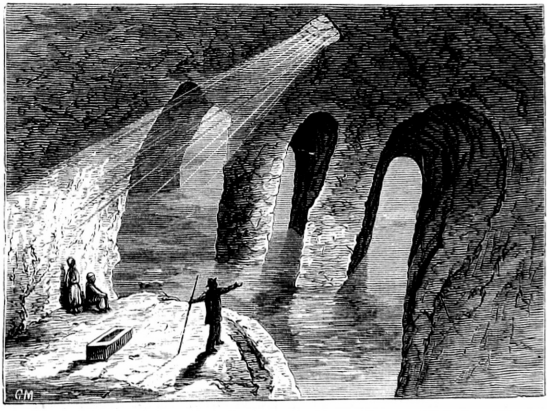


Tank or Pool of Bethesda, Jerusalem. (Cant. iv., 15.)

that by it the water is always accessible, however high or low it may be in the cistern.* We have also seen in Northern Syria, close to the ruins of Gebel Simon, a cistern more than a hundred feet in depth and as many in width, hewn out of the solid rock, and accessible only through an opening at the top, which was covered with a large stone. The cistern under a part of the Temple platform at Jerusalem, though not so deep, is much greater in extent, and is cut out of the solid rock, which is left in the form of rude pillars to support the roof.



Interior of a Cistern near Aleppo. (2 Chron. xxvi., 10.)

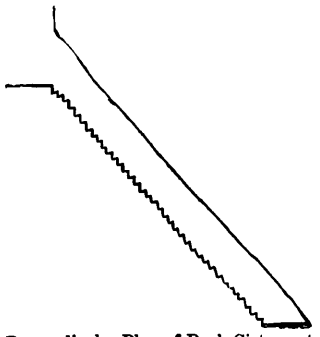


Cistern under the Temple area at Jerusalem. (Neh. ix., 25.)

One of the most ancient forms of a cistern, made for the supplying of water for the garrison of a citadel or fort upon a commanding height, consisted of a nearly circular shaft some fifteen feet in diameter and one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet in depth, cut into the solid rock at an angle of about forty-five degrees, the descent into which was by regular steps. This kind of cistern, however, we have seen only in the northern part

* "In the neighborhood" (of Birejik, in Mesopotamia) "were several cisterns or tanks, excavated in the rock side, with steps to enable the drawers of water to descend."—FLETCHER, p. 354.

of Asia Minor; and whether any one of this form is anywhere alluded to in the Scriptures is doubtful. The frequent mention of cisterns, however, proves that in some form they were as commonly used as now.* One of the "Giant Cities" of the Lijah, which is in an excellent state of preservation, contains so many cisterns hewn out of the hard basalt that the modern Arabs have called the place "Brak," or the Cistern.† And we hardly need to speak of the two large ancient cisterns shown to travelers at Constantinople, and bearing the name of "The Thousand and One Pillars," from the numerous stone pillars which bear the roof. One of them is still in use. It is also well known that a considerable portion of Alexandria, in Egypt, is built upon vast cisterns, yearly filled with the water of the Nile.‡



Perpendicular Plan of Rock Cistern at Tocat.

Orientals are exceedingly fond of gazing upon water, whether running or still. The houses of the wealthy often possess a tank or basin only a few feet in diameter, set in the middle or just outside of their principal room or divan, which on the side toward the court is entirely open. A fountain at the rim is ever running, and there is often at the centre of the basin a jet whose incessant play, while it tends to cool the atmosphere, strikes the ear with a soothing music. Here are spread carpets and cushioned sofas, and here the host receives and entertains his guests. For this jet of water a supply is needed at some elevation above the basin; and where nature has not provided it, Orientals, sometimes at great expense, construct ample reservoirs which afford a steady supply. The "Pools of Solomon," near Bethlehem, seem to have been built for this purpose, as well as to water the extensive gardens which doubtless adorned the country houses of that wealthy monarch.§ We find their counterpart in the reservoirs or "bends" built by the sultans

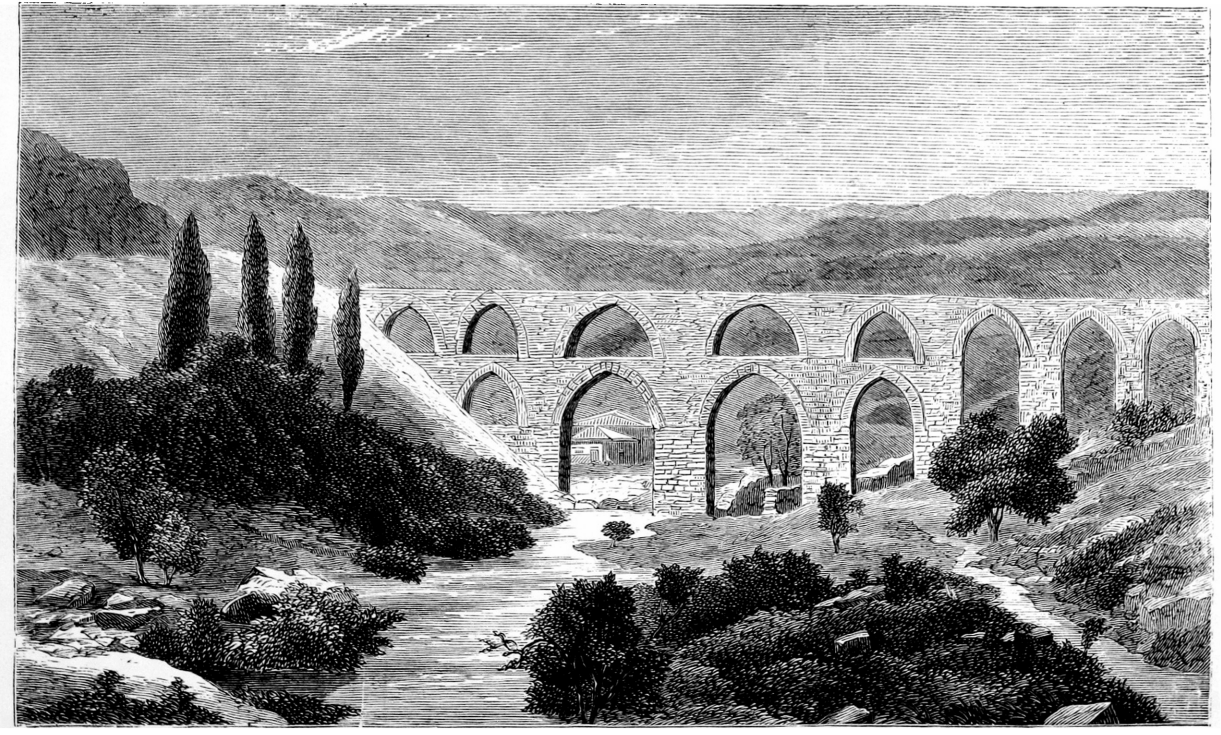
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* 2 Kings xviii., 31.

† Macgregor, p. 172.

‡ Thevenot, Part I., p. 124.

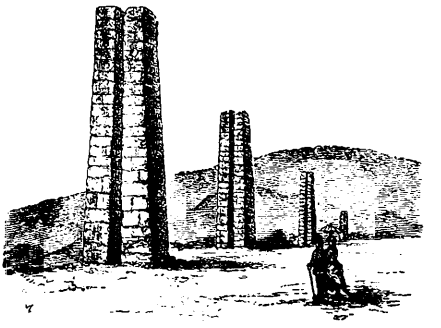
§ Eccles. ii., 5, 6.



Saracenic Aqueduct over the Meles, near Smyrna. (2 Kings xx., 20.)

in the vicinity of Constantinople. These are situated in the forests of Belgrade. A narrow valley is closed up with a wall of solid masonry, and soon becomes a beautiful sheet of water, which affords a regular supply for the gardens of the grandees of the empire and their palaces. Similar to this was the pool made by Hezekiah,* and others, mentioned in the Scriptures as the "Pool of Gibeon," that of Hebron, of Samaria, etc.†

Water is usually conveyed from a reservoir or spring in the mountains, by means of pipes of baked clay, to the town for the supply of its public and private fountains and baths. As the distance over which it is thus conveyed is often great, narrow valleys are spanned by aqueducts of wood or solid masonry. Such was the "conduit" of Hezekiah,‡ and such is now the aqueduct of Belgrade, near Constantinople. A similar structure near Smyrna was built by the Saracens, for the aqueduct is not a Western but an Eastern invention. Orientals have even made an approach to the discovery of the hydraulic principle, by which water seeks its own level, a fact which the ancients seem not to have known. When the distance is not great, they lay pipes down the hill into a valley and up again on the upper side, and suppose that the water reaches the latter height by the impetus which it acquires in running down the hill. Hence, when the valley is broad, they erect columns or towers, that the water rising to their summits may acquire a new impetus, and thus get over the entire valley. Some of these towers, however, are built within the towns, and are used merely to distribute the water to the different houses or quarters.



Water Pillars.

Orientals are generally good connoisseurs of water. This being almost their only beverage (with the exception of an occasional tiny cup of coffee

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* 2 Kings xx., 20.

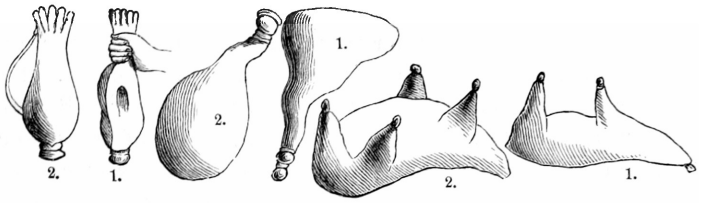
† 2 Sam. ii., 13; also iv., 12; and 1 Kings xxii., 38. ‡ 2 Kings xx., 20.

without sugar), they learn to distinguish, by the sense of taste, the smallest shade of difference in the quality of the water of different springs. There are in Constantinople shops in which nothing but water is sold, the price of a glass varying in accordance with the reputation of the spring whence it is brought. Nor would it be easy to deceive the customers. The water of a spring near Nicomedia is often conveyed to Constantinople, a distance of sixty miles by water, for the use of the pashas and grandees; and a steamer regularly plies between the capital and the island of Marmora, seventy-five miles off, in the sea of that name, in order to supply the sultan's seraglio with the water of a celebrated spring. This may perhaps somewhat serve to explain the longing of King David for a draught from the "well of Bethlehem," his own native city, of which he had been accustomed to drink when a child. But when the good man found it had been procured at the risk of the life of some of his bravest followers, he showed his noble heart by refusing to taste of it, and pouring it as an offering to the God of battles.* Our statement also serves to illustrate the estimate placed by the inhabitants of Jericho upon the favor they asked of the Prophet Elisha, and the value of the miracle he performed by "healing the spring of the waters" which supplied that city.†

Water has often to be conveyed over the desert, as the traveler would otherwise perish from thirst. It is carried in leathern sacks or "bottles," made of the entire skin of an ox, usually tanned. The openings at the feet and neck are sewed, one hole only being left for pouring in and drawing out the water. This opening is carefully tied up after filling, in order to prevent a leakage. But the heat of the sun is so intense, that these "bottles" have to be daubed over with oil or grease, otherwise the water evaporates in a few days. Earthen vessels are rarely transported in such journeys, on account of their liability to break. Smaller bottles are everywhere in use made of an entire goat-skin; but sheep-skins are never employed, not possessing sufficient strength.

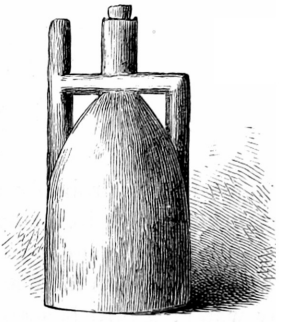
In the accompanying illustration we have placed side by side different kinds of skin-bottles, all of which are faithful copies of well-known originals—the ancient from the Egyptian and

* 2 Sam. xxiii., 15, 16. † 2 Kings ii., 19-22.



Ancient (1) and Modern (2) Skin-bottles. (Gen. xxi., 14; Josh. ix., 14; Matt. ix., 17.)

Assyrian remains, and the modern from the works of Lane and others—lest we should be charged with partiality were we to copy our own drawings. The identity of the forms is certainly very close and noteworthy. There is also a kind of jar, cut out of pine wood, found in some parts of the country, which answers the purpose of carrying water, and keeps it quite cool if hung on the shady side of the traveler's horse or camel.*



Wooden Water-jug.

The Arabs have repeatedly been known, when driven to extremities by thirst, to kill one of their camels, and drink the water which is found in its stomach, nature having wonderfully enabled that animal to swallow at once, and carry within its own body, a provision of water sufficient to last it many days.

We now turn from the consideration of this precious element to the life led upon the water by the sailor and the fisherman.

The oldest record found in the Scriptures of the construction of a craft to float upon water is that of Noah's ark. We have no information of a positive nature respecting this remarkable structure except what is contained in the sacred text;† but though the dimensions are therein minutely given, the shape or form is not otherwise described. The name תֵּבָה in the original Hebrew is the same as that rendered κίβωτὸς, *a chest*, in the Greek of both the Old and the New Testaments. Considering all the circumstances of the case, it is probable that Noah's ark was a large floating house, thirty feet in height by fifty in

* Pococke, i., p. 131.

† Gen. vi., 14–16.

breadth, and about five hundred feet long, built of the wood of the wild cypress ("gopher"), which grows upon all the high mountains of Western Asia, and particularly of Armenia. This wood is of the same enduring nature as the cedar. But the name "gopher" has been applied to a variety of trees, some of which yield the "pitch" with which the ark was covered "within and without."* The ark had a slanting roof, and was not intended for sailing purposes, but simply to float upon the water and preserve its precious freight. Tradition agrees with this description. The city of Apamea, in Asia Minor, was built at the foot of a high mountain, upon which its inhabitants claimed that Noah's ark rested after the Deluge; hence they called their city "Apamea of the ark," to distinguish it from other cities of the same name; it also probably indicates the early existence there of an arkaïc worship. Silver coins are still extant of this city, struck by Alexander Severus, Macrinus, or Philip, representing "two persons in an ark which rests upon a rock surrounded by water: a bird is seen flying with a branch in its claws, and another rests on the ark. A man and a woman stand in front, with their right hands raised. On the ark is the Greek word ΝΩΕ (Noah), and we must therefore designate the gentleman and lady within the ark by the name of the Patriarch and his "better half."†



Coin of Apamea. (Gen. viii., 10, 11, 18.)

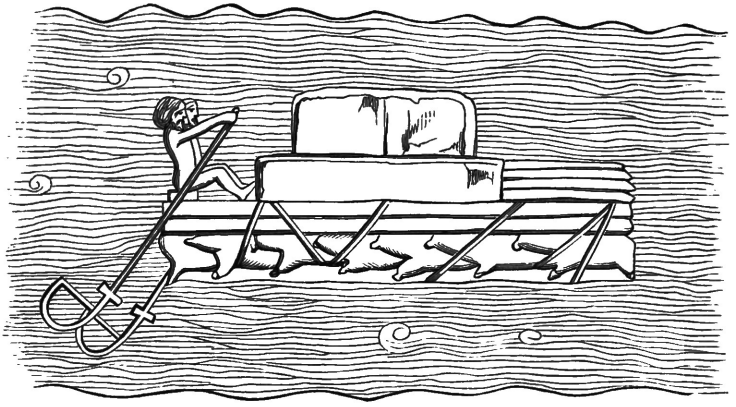

Assyrian Warrior swimming on an inflated Skin.

The Hellenic tradition of the Deluge, also, represents Deucalion and his wife as having been saved from the flood by floating in a box or chest, until the waters had retired.

* Gen. vi., 14.

† Arundell, i., p. 210.

One of the earliest forms of a boat used by mankind consisted of the inflated skins of animals. It is a remarkable fact, however, that probably the only place in the world in which this primitive mode of transportation is still in use is the course of the Tigris and the Euphrates, in Mesopotamia; while the only ancient pictures of this manner of floating are found among the



Inflated Skin Raft: from Assyrian Sculpture. (Isa. xliii., 14.)

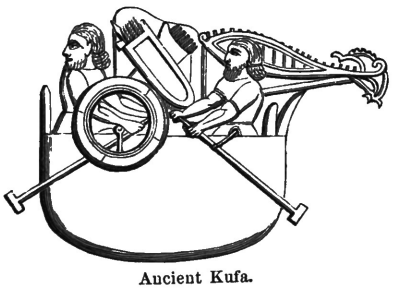
sculptures of Nineveh on the former of these rivers. The accompanying sketches are copied thence, and illustrate the manner of crossing the river by a single warrior, after inflating the skin, precisely as is done now in the same localities; also the raft supported by a number of inflated skins, and conveying stone for building the palace of Sennacherib; the only point in which it differs from the modern *Kelek* is in the shape of the



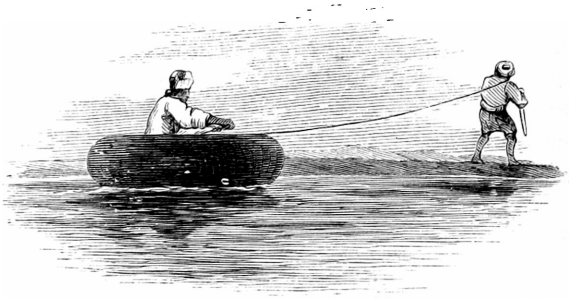
Modern Kelek, with Tent.

oars. We have drawn the raft now used to show this striking resemblance. It is employed in the conveyance of produce to Bagdad, where the wood is profitably sold, and the bags are sent home on the backs of donkeys. A similar raft or float exists upon the Nile, only earthen jars are used instead of inflated skins.*

The Nineveh sculptures also represent a peculiar boat still in use upon those rivers: it resembles an oval basket, and is made of willow branches, and daubed within and without with bitumen. It closely resembles a similar basket-boat found, according to Catlin, among the Mandan tribe of North American Indians, whose principal festival appears to be a commemoration of the Deluge. Besides these, there were boats of the ordinary form plying upon these rivers, which still exist, but are now confined to the portion of the Tigris lying below Bagdad, on account of the shallowness of the water. In Egypt also we have, upon the ancient monuments, the fac-simile of the boats which to-day



Ancient Kufa.



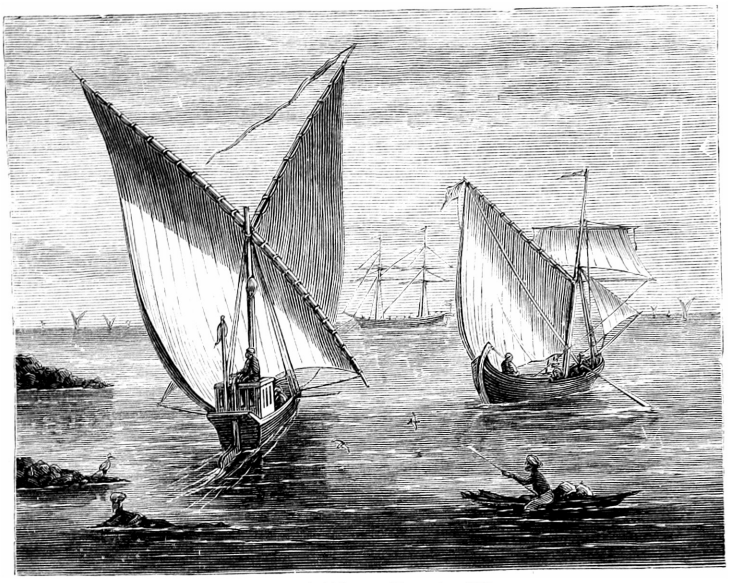
Modern Kufa.

ply up and down the Nile, with their lateen-sails about two hundred feet in length, and following the same rules of navigation as in the time of Herodotus.†

Both Egyptian and Assyrian remains contain pictures of

* Pococke, i., 84, pl. 8.

† Bruce, i., 44, etc.



Oriental Ships. (Psa. civ., 26.)

ancient ships which floated upon the Mediterranean, and have thus afforded us the opportunity to compare them with those of the modern Levant.

No one who has sailed on the waters of Western Asia can have failed to notice the difference between their ships and sailing craft, and those of Europe and America. This difference consists chiefly in the lofty stern of Eastern vessels, while in those of the West the entire line of the bulwarks is nearly parallel to the surface of the sea. The time is not far distant, however, when the old form still prevailed in Europe. The pictures we possess of the famous Dutch fleets, the Spanish Armada, and the ships which landed Queen Anne and the Prince of Orange on the shores of England, show that the mariners of that day, and even of a later period, affected still loftier sterns than many of the ancients.

But though numerous steamboats and sailing vessels built on the modern pattern are seen in all parts of the Mediterranean, yet the Oriental adheres, in the main, to the ancient form, which he deems better adapted to his habits and the waters in which he sails.

The peculiarity of form to which we have alluded characterizes the craft of every size on the Black Sea, through the Ægean Sea, and the eastern end of the Mediterranean. A narrow bow usually rises to a considerable height, while the sides are low and spreading out above, so as to keep the deck dry. The stern is sharp like the bow, but rises high, while the cumbrous rudder reaches still higher, and has a very long cross-pole, one end of which is held by the steersman. This important personage—always the captain or his mate—sits cross-legged upon a little quarter-deck, from which high position he can best watch the course of the ship, which he steers not by the compass, but solely with the eye. At the extreme end of the stern is often seen a small low bench, upon which the steersman sometimes sits for a change. Here the captain often rests his head when, as is his custom, he sleeps upon the quarter-deck. This little bench may generally be seen in the fishing crafts, particularly those which ply on the Sea of Galilee,* a circumstance which explains the nature of the "pillow" upon which rested the head of our Lord during the sudden storm narrated in Mark iv., 38. Passengers of distinction alone are allowed a place upon the quarter-deck.

The little skiffs which glide upon the surface of the currents in the Bosphorus at Constantinople, with an ease and swiftness unequaled by any other craft, and have the name of *Kùrlangùch*, or "the swallows," do not deviate from the general form we have described; but their extreme length of bow and stern makes up for their diminished height. They have two little decks, and the passengers sit on the bottom of the boat in order to steady the frail little bark.

In one respect, however, modern sailing craft differ from those of Bible times: we refer to the mode of steering. It can not be doubted that the original model of the ship was taken from the duck and other aquatic birds. The paddles or oars were rude imitations of their feet; and as they also use them for the purpose of altering their course, two broad paddles were placed on the two sides of the ship near the stern, and employed as rudders. It is doubtless to this sort of steering gear that Luke refers in the narrative of Paul's shipwreck.†

* MacGregor, "Rob Roy on the Jordan," p. 358. † Acts xxvii., 40.

A more thorough study of nature, however, led to the adoption of the single rudder now in universal use, in imitation of fishes, which alter their course by the motion of their tails; but the steering paddle is still often used in addition to the rudder.

An observer can not fail to notice that an eye is carved or painted on each side of the bows of many modern Oriental ships.* This was also the case in ancient times. Imagination gave life and sense to the craft: it peered into the storm with its eyes, and pressed forward to its goal. This is referred to in the narrative of Paul's last voyage: "And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive."† "Could not bear up into the wind" would, by a literal translation, be rendered, "Could not keep her eyes to the wind." The correctness of our interpretation is proved by several pictures of ancient ships which have been found painted upon the wall of a house unburied at Pompeii; these may be seen in Calmet's large Dictionary, vol. iii., fragment 214. The same process of imagination is found indicated in almost every language. In English we do not speak of a ship in the neuter gender, but in the feminine: "She has reached *her* destination;" "She is going ten knots."

Orientals now, like the ancients, use oars or sweeps in every kind of vessel, however large. They are rendered necessary by the frequent dead calms which occur along the rock-bound coast, in the numerous bays, and among the lofty islands. That portion of the oar which is within the vessel is made thick and heavy, and is even loaded with lead, that it may balance the much longer portion which extends beyond the ship's side. Each oar or sweep is worked by two or even three men together. Not many years ago, common ships had as many oars as in ancient times; in the *Sambikeh*, for instance, which was of the size of a common galiot or small galley (or ship of war), only a little longer, there were at least twelve oars on each side, and forty-eight oarsmen in all; it had but one mast,

* This custom also prevails in China. "On either side of the bow there is never wanting a huge eye. We asked a Chinese seaman the significance of that ornament. He promptly replied: 'Junk no have eyes, no can see.' It is a remarkable coincidence that not only the boats but the houses of the Alaska Indians are furnished with eyes."—SEWARD'S "Travels Round the World," p. 105.

† Acts xxvii., 15.

and a very large sail.* The number of these sweeps does not now usually exceed two on each side of the ship, and is often but one. But during the Greek revolution, fifty years ago, the piratical vessels significantly called "Mysticks" often carried twenty pairs of oars.

Modern Orientals have discovered the inconvenience of having only one mast in large ships, but the smaller craft never carry more. It is short, and inclines forward. Near its base rests a long yard, which reaches to the end of a broad lateen-sail. To an Occidental eye this looks very clumsy, especially the bagging of the upper portion of the sail, and the thick ribs of extra cloth lining it there. But it is the form best adapted to the sudden gusts and squalls they meet upon the waters they navigate. We have seen boats with a neater sail upset in an instant, while these, slightly leaning over for a moment, seemed to stand up more firmly as the breeze grew stiffer; the wind striking the upper part of the lateen-sail from below lifts up and steadies the vessel. In Egypt some of the gala boats on the Nile "spread a sail of many colors, as was done anciently in the same land."†

We have described thus minutely the ships and boats of modern Western Asia, because we believe they present a most correct picture, on the whole, of those which existed when the Scriptures were written. The Jews were not much addicted to a sea-faring life,‡ yet even in David's time they held possession of sea-ports upon the Mediterranean and Red Sea. These could not be of any considerable size, and the ships of the ancients rarely exceeded one thousand two hundred tons burden. Often no regular harbor existed, and, on the occurrence of a storm, most of the shipping was drawn up, as it is now, upon the beach of a tideless sea. This process is described so far back as the siege of Troy, by Homer's immortal verse. In Solomon's day, the servants of King Hiram cut the cedars of

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* Thevenot, Part I., chap. lxii., p. 224.

† Thevenot, Part I., chap. lxvi., p. 233. Wilkinson, ii., p. 167.

‡ The graphic pictures of the horrors of sea-sickness contained in Psa. cvii., 25–27, and Prov. xxiii., 34, show that the Hebrews were as little fond of the sea as are their posterity; and this applies to all Orientals in an eminent degree, professional seamen alone excepted; at the same time, sea-captains all agree that no people suffer the infliction with greater resignation.

Lebanon, and, making them into rafts, floated them to Joppa, the port appointed by the Jewish king.* In the same manner, the timber which grows abundantly on the northern coast of Asia Minor is cut down by the sultan's servants, made into rafts at Sinope and other ports on the Black Sea, and conveyed to the capital, for the supply of the imperial navy yard, and for house-building.

In Bible times, the Sea of Tiberias was covered with many a vessel and boat employed either in fishing or in a carrying-trade between the large and flourishing cities which stood on both sides of that beautiful sheet of water. A constant communication was kept up between those of the tribes which dwelt on the western shore and their brethren on the eastern, on whom devolved the defense of the land against such enemies as came upon them from the desert. History mentions at one time as many as three hundred ships of various sizes which sailed upon the lake. But the five cities upon its shores were long ago destroyed by the repeated invasions of foreign foes. The people were either killed or scattered; and frequent inroads of the wandering Arabs have maintained the insecurity of life and property in that vicinity. For the last one hundred and fifty years there has been but one boat reported by travelers upon the lake; but there were six in 1870.† The Turkish tax-gatherers effectually prevent the revival of the fisheries by imposing the exorbitant tax of five hundred dollars per annum on every fishing-boat.

The "ferry-boat" employed to reconduct King David home‡ must have resembled the craft then in use upon the Sea of Galilee, or the ferries now plying upon the Orontes near Antioch, which are drawn across by means of a rope stretched from shore to shore; this is also done on the Upper Euphrates, and on many rivers of Asia Minor. As for the Dead Sea, it has, ever since the catastrophe which overtook the "cities of the plain," possessed a most insalubrious climate, and its navigation has, in modern times, been accomplished only by an American,§ but not without loss of life.

The modern seamen of Western Asia use no compass. They

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* 1 Kings v., 8, 9.

† MacGregor, "Rob Roy on the Jordan," pp. 352–7.

‡ 2 Sam. xix., 18.

§ Lieutenant Lynch, U. S. N.

sail almost wholly in sight of land. They are skillful in discerning the signs of the weather, and avoid a storm by running into some place of safety. They generally spend the winter in a secure harbor, with the exception of short trips when the weather is settled and fair. In all these respects they resemble the ancients as they are particularly described in the disastrous voyage of St. Paul on his way toward Rome.* Our remarks, however, do not apply to the Greeks of Europe and the Archipelago, who, since the independence of their country, have adopted many European improvements. Before that revolution they differed in no respect from their neighbors on the Asiatic continent. The famous five ships of Canaris and his companions, which destroyed so many Turkish men-of-war, were nothing more than *saccolévas*, such as are now seen sailing up and down the channel of Scio. The noted pirate-ships that preyed upon the merchant navy of Europe for a dozen years, from 1821, were vessels of the same kind, propelled by forty oars, which suddenly attacked the becalmed merchantmen, and, when pursued by a ship of war, slipped into some rock-bound cove, sunk their vessel under its waters, and escaped to the surrounding cliffs, to put to sea again as soon as the enemy was out of sight. These robbers of the sea somewhat resembled in their habits and the fashion of their craft the celebrated pirates who infested the southern shores of Asia Minor just before the Christian era, and who were destroyed by Pompey. But the most perfect counterpart of the latter in modern times is found in the famous Algerine corsairs, so long the terror of the sea, who levied black-mail on the commerce of Europe.

We must in this place make a brief reference to some of the statements contained in the Book of Jonah, a composition which contains very remarkable internal evidences of its authenticity, but which has, nevertheless, been made the subject of much controversy. The Tarshish therein mentioned† is probably the Tarsus of the New Testament‡ and the Tarsoos of modern times, situated near the coast of Cilicia. It points out the fact, which is confirmed by other testimony, that there was much trade going on along the shore, and between the different ports

* Acts xxvii., 12, 13.

† Jonah i., 3.

‡ Acts ix., 11, 30; xi., 25.

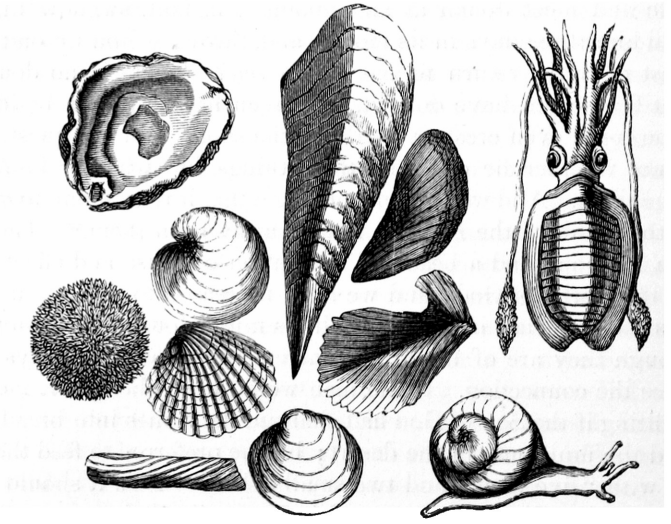
of the Mediterranean. Two opposite courses have been followed by those who have discussed the miracle concerning Jonah and the fish. Some have sought to represent the entire narrative as a myth or allegory; while others have converted as many incidents as possible into miraculous interpositions of the Deity. Some of the latter class, for instance, have insisted that the fish must have been a whale, because the English translators have so rendered the word *ketos;* and in order to meet the difficulties which they thereby create, they suppose that the Mediterranean Sea may just at that period have swarmed with whales, which it never did before or since; or they triumphantly ask whether God can not commission a whale to go from the North Pole and meet Jonah at an appointed instant, swallow him, hold him three days in its mouth, and, throwing him up on the coast of Syria, return to the frozen sea? There is no doubt that God could have done it, and much harder things besides —he could even create a whale on the spot. But the question is not whether he could do these things, but whether he *has* done them. And we must never forget that it is as wrong to *add* to the words of the Book as to take away from them.* There is a harmony and a beautiful adaptation of cause and effect in all the works of God: and we have no reason to think that he sets aside this law in what we call his miraculous interpositions, though they are of too rare occurrence to allow us always to trace the connection. Some men would have thought it more befitting if the Son of God had changed the stones into bread to feed the multitude in the desert; but he preferred to feed them all with "five loaves and two small fishes." Now it should be noticed that the word *ketos* used in Matt. xii., 40, is not restricted in its meaning to a whale or cetacean; "it may denote any sea-monster, either a whale or a shark, a seal, or a tunny of enormous size."† Now we find that the white shark exists in the waters of the Mediterranean as well as in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, and often attains the length of thirty feet. Though it generally first bites its prey, it frequently swallows it entire. Cases are on record, sustained by the most undoubted authority, in which entire bodies were found in the stomach of this fish, such as a man, a man clad with armor,

* Rev. xxii., 18.

† Smith's "Dict. of the Bible," art. *Whale.*

and even a horse! Moreover, naturalists have recorded that sharks have the habit of throwing up again whole and alive the prey they have swallowed.*

With these facts before us, we are forced to the conclusion that the agent employed in the punishment of the prophet Jonah was a white shark, or similar fish. We do not thereby deny the miraculous interposition of the Almighty, for we recognize that his being preserved "in the belly of the fish three days and three nights" was not an event which accorded with the usual order of nature, any more than the preservation of the young Hebrews in the midst of Nebuchadnezzar's "burning fiery furnace."



Shell-fish eaten in the Levant. (Deut. xxxiii., 19.)

Fish have ever formed, as now, an important article of food with the people of Bible lands. The law of Moses distinguished between the species having scales and those which have not; and many still observe this distinction, and do not eat the latter. But many do not make any distinction between them, both Moslems and Christians, and hold in high estimation the eel and other scaleless fish. They also consume a great variety of shell-fish; and it is evident that this was also practiced by

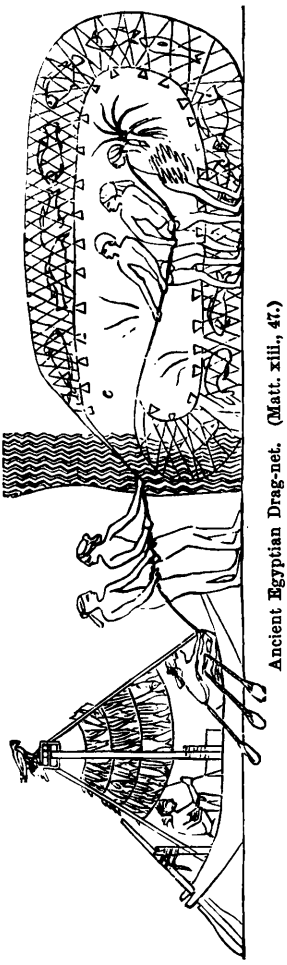
* Couch, "History of Fishes," i., 33.

the ancients, for among the ruins of ancient cities which stood upon the sea-shore are found many shells of different kinds, which were doubtless thrown away after the living animal had been eaten. The principal of these were, and are still, the oyster, the clam, the pecten, the solen, the pinna, the echinus, and the sepia. Some of these indeed, particularly the oyster, have ceased to exist where they were once abundant. The spawn of some fish, particularly the mullet, are much relished.* Shrimps, crabs, and lobsters are also caught—the first with a scoop-net, the others with the hand, by wading in the water, and the lobsters with a baited osier-trap. These and the star-fish are all represented in the carved pictures of the sea-coast of the Mediterranean found among the remains of ancient Nineveh. Moses says of the tribe of Zebulun, on the Mediterranean shore, "They shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand"†—language aptly expressive of the habits of most shell-fish which dwell in the sand of the sea-shore, as well as graphically descriptive of the manner of eating them.

Jerusalem was supplied with fish, as now, mainly from Joppa, a distance of forty miles; fish also used to be brought from the Sea of Galilee, which is twice that distance. The narrative of the New Testament shows that that sheet of water was well stocked with fish, as it still is, and that a considerable portion of the people dwelling on its shores were fishermen. The modes of catching fish were the same as are still in use in all parts of Western Asia. They are taken with the hook,‡ or with a scoop-net fastened around a hoop and suspended from the end of a pole. This is chiefly used in catching the small sardines which abound in the waters of the Levant, particularly in the harbors, and which are eaten either fresh, salted, or preserved in oil. But fishing on a larger scale is done by means of a long net, some three or four feet in width, with pieces of lead attached along one side to sink it, and of cork on the other to keep it afloat. The operation is performed by men occupying two boats. To one of these is made fast one end of the net, while the remainder is piled up in the other boat. The latter is rowed rapidly off in a curved line, while one of the crew

* Pococke, i., 18. † Deut. xxxiii., 19. ‡ Amos iv., 2; Matt. xvii., 27.

gradually drops the net into the water. The net is now spread, resting in a perpendicular position in the water. The two boats then, holding each one end of it, row quickly to the shore. The fishermen jump into the shallow water, and, holding the net-ropes, drag it to the shore, where they sit down, and slowly and carefully collect all the fish, shell-fish, and refuse which their net has scooped up, "gathering the good" into baskets, and "casting the bad away"—a scene we have witnessed many a time;* but which no picture of ours could portray more graphically than the accompanying copy of an Egyptian sculpture.



Ancient Egyptian Drag-net. (Matt. xiii., 47.)

Much of the fishing can only be carried on in the night, when the moon does not shine.† After the net is spread out in the water, pieces of pitch-pine are lighted and placed in a roughly-made wire basket attached to the extremity of a pole. This pole is made fast to the bows of the boat, which is then rowed round in a curved direction, beginning at some distance from the net, and gradually approaching the open space between the two ends of it. The fish are attracted by the light; but a man standing upright upon the bows holds a long pole in his hand, terminated at the farther end by a wooden ball of considerable size, and ever and anon strikes the water on either side of the boat, so as to produce a loud report and drive the fish toward the net; instead of this, large stones are sometimes flung into the water. In a dark night, the appearance of the flames gliding upon the sea, and of the man standing up in their light and

* Hab. i., 15; Matt. xiii., 47, 48. † John xxi., 3.

brandishing a spear-like pole, produces a truly singular and unique effect. The difference between this mode of fishing and that of the drag-net is, that the latter is larger and heavier, and is only used near the shore, while the former may be employed anywhere, and is drawn directly into the boat. This net is not unfrequently used in the day-time, as well as the striking-pole or the stones.*

A common sight upon the sea-shores of the Levant consists of the fishermen's nets, scores of yards of it spread out to dry. The rocks and old stone-walls are preferred, being heated by the sun, and absorbing more rapidly the moisture of the net.† So likewise may the "fishers" often be seen, "sitting" upon the shore or in their boats, "mending their nets," whose meshes are not unfrequently broken by the struggling fish.‡

The people of the East are fond of bathing, and many of them are expert swimmers. There are in some of the islands valuable sponge fisheries, which are wholly worked by native divers. During the inundation of the Nile in July and August, when the valley is changed into a lake, with the towns standing out of the water like so many islands—it is quite common to see troops of people, especially children, both boys and girls, swimming from one village to another. It is worthy of notice that they all swim "hand over hand," alternately raising each arm out of the water, and thus never presenting the whole breast but only one side to the stream. Western swimmers, on the contrary, bring their hands together at each stroke, and then separate them, which is a much slower mode of locomotion. The American Indians, who are generally expert swimmers, uniformly practice the Oriental mode.§ It is interesting to find that in ancient times also Orientals practiced the same mode of swimming as their descendants; for, among the many Assyrian sculptures which represent persons in the act of swimming, we have not discovered one that gives a different testi-

* See Luke v., 6, 7; John xxi., 6–11. In the passages referred to, the net would have been drawn up into the boat had not the weight of the fishes prevented. The "fisher's coat" mentioned in the latter passage was probably the same as is now worn by fishermen; it is a short *aba*, or jacket of felt, reaching not quite to the knees, and usually provided with a hood. It is "girded about the loins" with a leathern strap.

† Ezek. xxvi., 5. ‡ Matt. iv., 21. § Catlin i., 162.

mony. The accompanying illustration will serve as a specimen. This curious fact will be found to explain and illustrate several passages of Scripture, such as Isa. xxv., 11: "He shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim: and he shall



Assyrian Swimmer: from an ancient Sculpture. (Isa. xxv., 11.)

bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands." The ultimate lifting up of each arm and bringing it down with force, well expresses the repeated blows by which Moab was to "be trodden down as straw for the dunghill."*

* Isa. xxv., 10.

CHAPTER III.

PRODUCTIONS OF THE SOIL.—CEREALS.

We have no general description in the Bible of the products of the soil in Palestine, but its frequent incidental allusions enable us to ascertain the fact that they have not varied in modern times. Moses, describing the Land of Canaan to Israel in the desert, speaks as follows: "The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it."* This description is intended to set forth the superiority of the Land of Canaan over Egypt. The rains of heaven never descend upon most of the latter, and it was and is still a narrow valley of alluvial soil, closed in on the east and west by perfectly barren mountains and sandy plains, and watered by the Nile, which has formed a delta in the vicinity of the sea. No springs are to be found in it. The only water drunk is taken from the river,† which overflows its banks at a stated season of the year, and waters the gardens and fields that produce the sustenance of the people. The products of the soil are somewhat more tropical than those of Palestine. The vine and the olive, the fig and the pomegranate are indeed common, but enjoyed, as formerly, only by the wealthy. The principal productions of the soil are wheat—or "corn," as the Scriptures call it‡—barley, rice and cotton (the two last having been introduced in more recent times); and Moses assures his people that they shall not lack the articles of food to which they had been accustomed during their sojourn of two hundred years in the land of bondage.

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* Deut. viii., 7-9. † Exod. vii., 24. ‡ Gen. xli., 57; Exod. ix., 31, 32.

The honey of Palestine, known to be of an excellent quality,* and the numerous flocks upon the hill-sides, entitled it, and, though to a very inferior degree, still entitle it, to the name of "a land flowing with milk and honey."† The Jews were eminently an agricultural people. Commerce was discouraged among them, for the purpose of isolating them and preventing their adopting the idolatrous practices of their neighbors. It is worthy of note that the sea-coast, of which they finally took possession after a long struggle with the remnant of the Philistines, does not possess a single natural harbor, and to this day remains almost wholly closed to navigation and commerce. The nearest ports are Tyre and Sidon, and Providence never allowed the Jews to obtain possession of these. It was only at a late period in the Jewish history, *i. e.*, when the Messiah was about to appear, that many of these people settled in the principal cities, first of the Persian and then of the Macedonian and Roman empires, and doubtless prepared the heathen for the reception of Christianity, by their profession of a monotheistic religion.

The division of the land into fields for the purpose of cultivation is made, at the present day, in the same manner as in the remotest times. Neither wall, hedge, nor fence surrounds such fields; their limits are marked either by some natural boundary, such as a river, the bed of a torrent, the edge of a valley or hill, the highway, or, what is more generally the case, by means of large stones mostly buried in the soil. The repeated injunction contained in the Old Testament, not to "remove the old landmarks," apply equally to the present time.‡

The standard measure of land throughout the Turkish Empire is called a *deunum*, and is the area which one pair of oxen can plow in a single day; it is equal to a quarter of an acre, or a square of forty *arshuns* (nearly one hundred feet). There seems to be but one allusion to this fact in the Scriptures; it

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* 1 Sam. xiv., 25–27; Matt. iii., 4.

† Deut. xxxi. 20. This expression, however, may have originated in a similar custom to what now prevails in the more fertile portions of Abyssinia, where the indispensable, and often the *only* article of food eaten at a meal, consists of butter and honey mixed together in a plate, into which the bread is dipped (Bruce iv., 232). We have repeatedly eaten this dish in various parts of Western Asia.

‡ Deut. xix., 14; Job xxiv., 2; Prov. xxii., 28; xxiii., 10.

is found in 1 Sam. xiv., 14, where the exploit of Jonathan and his armor-bearer is described; twenty of the enemy are stated to have fallen within the space of "a half acre of land" of "a yoke of oxen"—an expression better rendered by the words, "within the space of half a *deunum* of land." This measure is referred to in ancient profane writers, so that no change has occurred in this respect.

In speaking of the products of the soil, we are obliged to notice at the same time the condition of agriculture among the Hebrews. All they knew upon this subject had been derived from the Egyptians, among whom they had so long dwelt. From them they acquired the use of the plow and of the various tools and implements which we see figured on Egyptian monuments; yet they doubtless found them employed by the Canaanites, and thus ready to their hands at the time of the conquest. A close examination of these instruments enables us to ascertain the fact that no change whatever has occurred in the art of agriculture up to the present time in Western Asia. The ox is still inferior in size, and is not unfrequently seen yoked with the ass.* There are districts, however, where this valuable animal will compare well with those of more Northern climes; just as would seem to have been the case in the time of the Psalmist, who particularly notices "the Bulls of Bashan."† The buffalo now abounds in Asia Minor, and is found in Syria and Palestine; but he has been introduced since the beginning of the Christian era. His great strength renders him very useful to the farmer, both in plowing and drawing heavy carts.

The plows of Palestine are small and light, consisting of a long piece of wood, having one extremity fastened to the yoke, and the other attached to a shorter piece obliquely tranverse; one end of the latter is set in the share, the other is held by the right hand of the plowman, who with his left grasps the goad—a long stick armed with a pointed piece of iron sharpened with a file.‡ The farmer usually makes his own plows, the shares being purchasable in the towns, and resembling in form, though not in size, the point of an arrow or spear, with a socket to receive the wooden part of the plow, to which

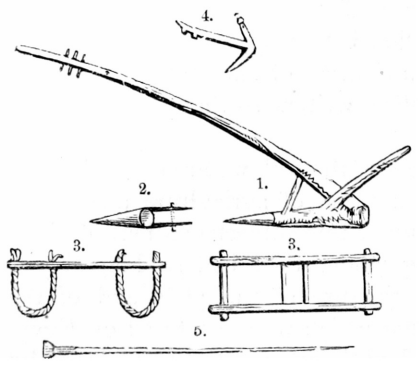
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* Deut. xxii., 10.

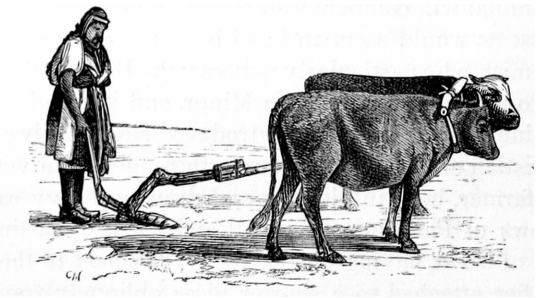
† Psa. xxii., 12.

‡ 1 Sam. xiii., 21; Luke ix., 62.

it is made fast with a peg or nail. The yoke is very thin and light, and about twice the length of ours; so that the oxen stand farther apart, and the plow can the more easily be made to turn and avoid an obstruction which might break it. The whole thing, however, is so light that one often sees a farmer going to his work in the morning, or returning home at night, bearing his plow upon his shoulder; or he rides a diminutive donkey, with a couple of plows fastened to the saddle behind him. The horse is never used for plowing. The illustrations give a good idea of an Arab farmer at work, and of plows and other tools used in different parts of the country.*



1. Modern Plow (Luke ix., 62); 2. Share (Isa. ii., 4); 3. Yoke (Neh. xix., 2); 4. Mattock, and 5. Goad (Judg. iii., 31).



Arab Farmer plowing. (Isa. xxviii., 24.)

With such instruments (and their small cattle can not draw heavier), the earth can not be furrowed to a great depth. The sod is not turned over either to the right hand or to the left, but merely scratched a few inches below the surface. It argues well for the productiveness of the soil that such a mode of cultivation has continued to yield crops adequate to the

* A thousand years ago there was essentially the same difference as now between the European and the Asiatic plow.—See LACROIX'S "Middle Ages."

entire support of a large population for a long succession of centuries.

The corn of Egypt is as famous now as in ancient times. Nor is that of Palestine inferior in quality. This remark, indeed, applies to the whole of Western Asia. We ourselves have seen a single grain produce thirteen ears, each of which contained from twenty to twenty five-grains,* and we have been assured by a friend in whose word we place the most explicit confidence, that "he has seen between Booldoor and Isparta, in Asia Minor, a single root of wheat which bore more than *one hundred* stems, each terminating in an ear."

The time of plowing commences as soon as "the early rain" of the end of September or beginning of October has softened the ground, and is continued through the winter, when the soil is not too heavy with moisture, even up to the beginning of March, at which time the more delicate seeds are put into the earth. Whenever there are facilities for irrigation, however, the plowing goes on through the year, and several crops are obtained of beans and other vegetables. It is a very common sight to see several yoke of oxen, each drawing a plow, following one another in the same field, thus supplying by repeated plowing the insufficiency of each operation. A wealthy farmer will so employ his oxen to go over each of his fields,† while those who possess but one pair aid each other in turn.

After the plow has passed twice over the soil—the second time at right angles to the first—and the sods have been broken up and smoothed with a wooden harrow,‡ the farmer walks over the ground, scattering the seed around him,§ which he takes from a bag or bushel-measure. It is then covered with a harrow; but sometimes a flock of sheep or goats is driven over the ground for the purpose of treading down the seed into the soil. This was also done anciently in Egypt.‖ Wheat and barley are sowed in the autumn, and the later crops in February.

The crop of barley is harvested in Palestine about the first of April, but that of wheat in May. The season of gathering in the crops in Western Asia differs according to the latitude,

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* Gen. xli., 22. † 1 Kings xix., 19. ‡ Isa. xxviii., 25.
§ Luke viii., 5–8. ‖ Wilkinson, "Ancient Egyptians," ii., 12, fig. 358.

but still more according to the elevation above the sea of any locality. There are cultivated fields, high up on lofty mountains, at a considerable distance from any habitation. The owners erect a booth, or a mud-hut, and take up their quarters there as soon as the grain begins to ripen, in order to preserve it from the depredations of wild boars and other animals. These upland crops often do not ripen until late in July.

The full meaning of the promise contained in Lev. xxvi., 5, *i. e.*, that "the threshing should reach unto the vintage, and the vintage unto the sowing time," will be apprehended by remembering that in Palestine generally the wheat harvest ordinarily begins the end of May, and the vintage the end of August, while plowing and sowing can rarely be done before November.

The standing grain is cut with a sickle, being gathered by the left arm for the purpose, bound in sheaves with a band of its own straw, and laid down on the ground upon the spot. Both men and women* engage in this operation, and they advance in a diagonal line across the field. They are not the common farm-laborers, but are hired by the day for the work. At the regular "meal-time," they gather under the shade of a tree and sit round a common dish furnished by the master of the field: the food they prefer is *leben* or sour milk, salad or pickles, which are cooling and refreshing in the midst of their heating employment. The poorest among the people, the widow and the orphan, are not unfrequently seen following the reapers, gleaning such ears of grain as may have been left behind.† The crop is sometimes pulled up by the roots with the hand instead of being cut with the sickle.‡ The weather being hot and the sun oppressive,§ a cruse or jar of water is kept in the shade of a tree or bush, and thither the laborers resort to quench their thirst.‖

The threshing-floor is prepared upon some level spot, just

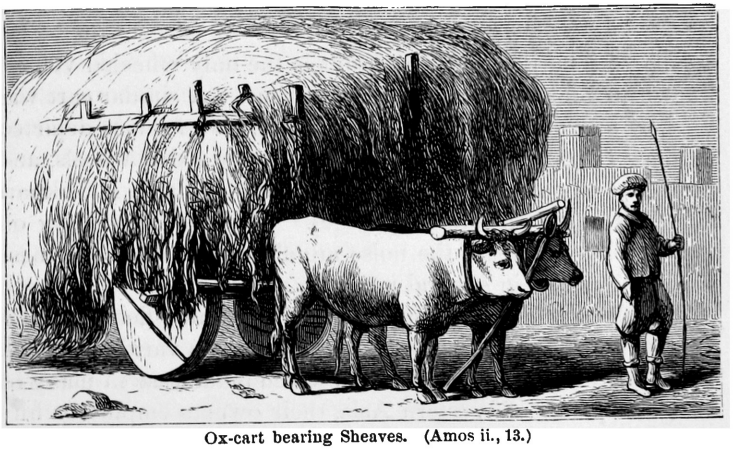
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* Ruth ii., 8, 9. † Lev. xix., 9.

‡ The word translated "pruning-hook" in our version occurs three times in the Old Testament, *i. e.*, in Isa. ii., 4; Joel iii., 10; and Mic. iv., 3. In every case the marginal reading is *scythe*, an instrument quite unknown in the East. The context, however, sufficiently indicates that the sacred writer had reference to the sickle, though it is mentioned elsewhere by another name.

§ 2 Kings iv., 18, 19. ‖ Ruth ii., 9.

outside of the village or town,* and sometimes within its limits. When this, however, is not of easy access, the threshing-floors are situated at a little distance, and among the fields.† But whatever spot is selected for the purpose, it must lie somewhat higher than the surrounding ground, so that the rain may run off from its surface without injuring it. In preparing the threshing-floor, the ground is beaten hard by artificial means, and clay is laid over it and smoothed with a stone roller, after which it soon dries in the heat of the sun. The size of the floor depends upon the number of owners, or of heaps usually threshed at one time; and it must be observed that all the crop is generally threshed at once, so that but one process is gone through with on the same spot during the season. The sheaves are gathered by the laborers, and brought to the threshing-floors upon their shoulders, or upon the backs of asses, mules, or camels. In many portions of the country, the sheaves are piled into a rude cart, upon which they are kept from falling by a wicker-work about four feet high.‡ These carts, or *arabas*, are

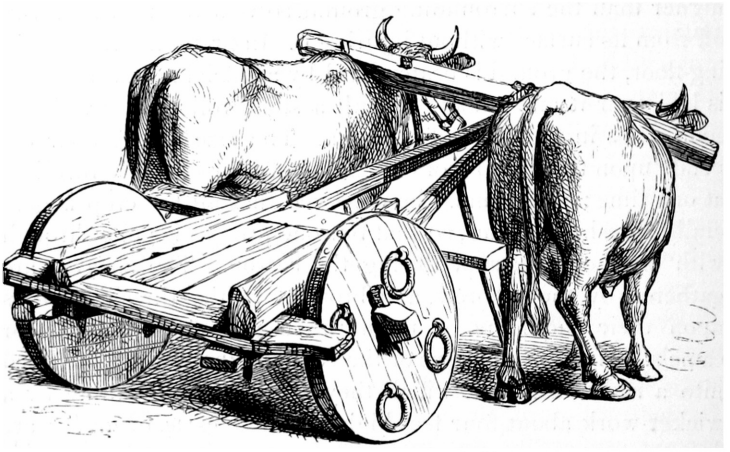


Ox-cart bearing Sheaves. (Amos ii., 13.)

probably similar to those used by the Hebrews, and drawn by a pair of oxen.§ Their wooden wheels are solid, and thickest in the middle, encircled by an iron hoop, which is made fast around the edge by means of large-headed nails. These wheels

* 1 Chron. xxi., 15, 16.
† Gen. l., 10.
‡ Amos ii., 13.
§ 1 Sam. vi., 7.

are firmly fixed upon the axle-tree, which revolves with them under the body of the cart, giving forth unearthly sounds. The entire construction of this cart will be seen in the illustration here given: it is interesting both on account of the great an-

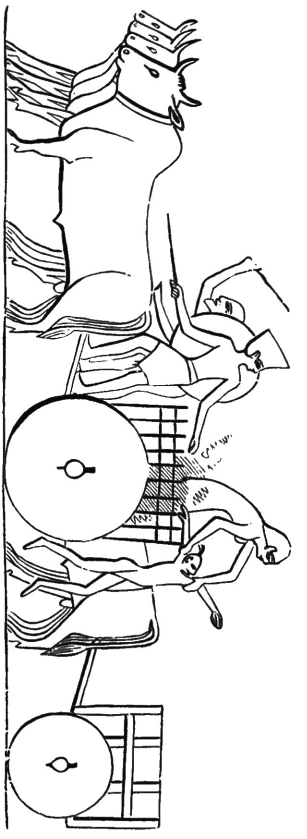


Oriental Ox-cart. (1 Sam. vi., 7.)

tiquity of its origin, and because it is the only wheeled vehicle known in Bible lands at the present time. A similar cart was used by a nation at war with the Egyptians; for it is depicted on one of their monuments, with its solid wooden wheels, and the frame upon the cart. The hieroglyphic name is Tokhari (see illustration on following page). The iron rings hung on the wheels to increase the noise are alone wanting; but these are by no means in general use even now.

The sheaves are thrown upon the threshing-floor in piles eight or ten feet high. They are threshed in a variety of ways. When mares are kept in the field, which is the case in many of the great plains of Western Asia, their owners employ or hire them out, during the harvest season, to tread the grain upon the threshing-floors, which is done as follows: the heaps of sheaves are first spread out evenly upon the floor, in a diameter of fifty or sixty feet. Seven or eight of the horses are then tied to each other by a single rope, so as to stand abreast from the centre to the circumference of the circle. The driver holds the end of the rope with one hand, or fastens it to an upright post in the centre, while with the other he whips the animals

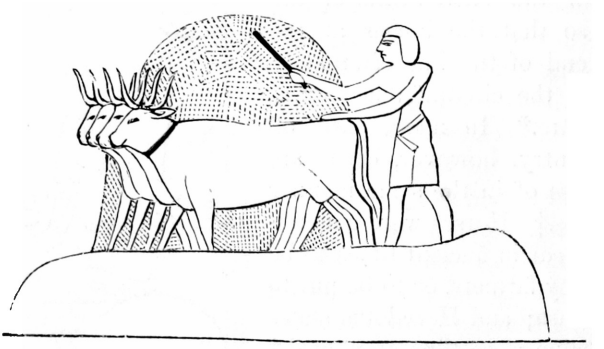
to keep them moving abreast in a circle around him, as he stands in the middle of the heap. The outside horses of course have the most traveling to do, and so he frequently changes their relative position by holding in turn each of the extremities of the rope, so that the horses at the other end of the line alternately walk at the circumference or at the centre.* In many parts of the country, however, cattle are made use of in the same manner as horses.† Horses were generally too dear in ancient times to be owned by farmers, or to be put to such a use; and Herodotus states that swine were thus employed.‡ The illustration on the following page, however, would seem to prove that oxen were used anciently, as now, by the Egyptians in threshing their grain. It is copied by Wilkinson from one of the monuments of that land. But the most generally adopted mode of threshing consists in the use of a sort of sled made of thick boards, four or five feet in length, with many pieces of flint or iron set firmly in the wood of the under surface. This is drawn by a pair of oxen.§ Several sets of small wheels are sometimes used instead of flints. Two or three of these sleds are often at work on a single heap; and it is a striking fact that in all Western Asia, and even in India, it is the universal custom to allow the oxen or other animals thus employed freely to eat of the crop they are helping to harvest.‖ The driver, generally a little boy, or perchance a girl, stands erect upon the sled, goad in hand, or



Cart of the ancient Tokhari.

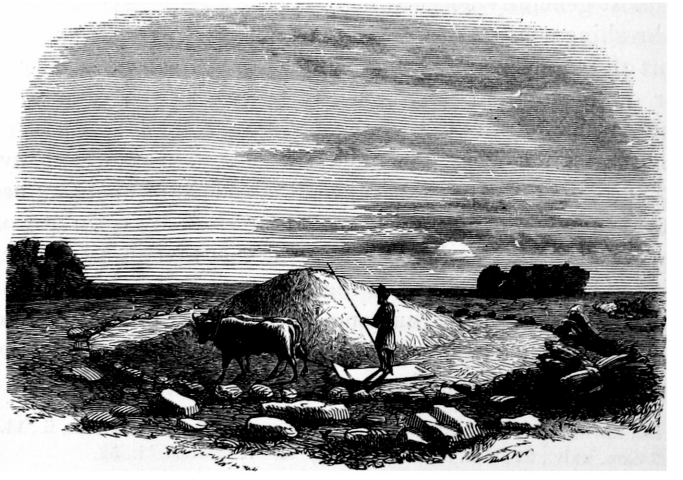
* Isa. xxviii., 28. † Amos iv., 1; Mic. iv., 13. ‡ Herodotus, ii., 14.
§ 2 Sam. xxiv., 22; Isa. xli., 15; Varro, "De re Rustica," i., 52.
‖ Deut. xxv., 4.

sits cross-legged, or enjoys the luxury of a stool or primitive chair. In this mode of threshing, however, the whole pile of sheaves is not leveled at once, as is usual in the former, but is allowed to stand in the centre, while the edges are gradually brought down and threshed until the whole pile is finished.



Oxen treading the Corn. (Deut. xxv., 4.)

The object aimed at by these processes is not simply to separate the grain from the ears, but also to cut and crush the straw, by which it is believed that the nourishing properties it contains are more fully developed. Horses and cattle certainly prefer straw thus prepared to that merely cut by any other process. This article, with barley, constitutes the chief sustenance of



Threshing-floor. (1 Chron. xxi., 23.)

horses, cattle, and camels, for hay is nowhere made in Palestine.* The grain and straw having thus been threshed, are heaped high in a long ridge or pile, preparatory to winnowing, for which purpose the chief instrument used is a large wooden shovel or "fan."† The sheaves had before been handled with a wooden fork of the same size.

About the month of May begins, all over Western Asia, the refreshing sea-breeze, which continues through the summer until the "former rains" at the end of September.‡ It is only along the Black Sea shore of Asia Minor that this breeze is interrupted by the frequent showers which come from the southwest, and which, while they maintain a rich vegetation through the summer, entail the necessity of putting the crops under cover as soon as cut. In Palestine and Syria, however, not a drop of rain usually falls after the first of May, though we have known a thunder-shower to occur on the first of June; but the event is rare, and is attended with much inconvenience to the farmers.§ The sun's heat increases, and the only danger to the crops, as they lie upon the threshing-floors, arises from the accidental or spontaneous combustion occasioned by carelessness in cutting the crops when not perfectly dry in the field. In such a case the flames spread with fearful rapidity,‖ so that the utmost exertions can scarcely save any thing lying within the threshing-floors; should there be trees or bushes near by, there is danger of their taking fire, and thus the conflagration sometimes spreads quite a distance, consuming vineyards and olive-trees, before it can be arrested. The sea-breeze sets in about nine or ten o'clock in the morning, and is felt far in the interior. We have been refreshed by it two hundred miles from the seashore. It continues until after sunset, when it suddenly drops and the evening is perfectly calm. During the night there is a land-breeze, which blows in the opposite direction, toward the sea; but it is never strong. The sea-breeze is at its height about two or three o'clock in the afternoon, when it is of such a strength that the waves come dashing upon the shore; and it is at this time that the greatest activity prevails upon the

* Gen. xxiv., 32; 1 Kings iv., 28; Isa. xi., 7.
† Isa. xxx., 24; xli., 16; Matt. iii., 12.
‡ Deut. xi., 14; Jer. v., 24; Joel ii., 23, 24.
§ 1 Sam. xii., 16–18; Prov. xxvi., 1. ‖ Psa. xxxv., 5.

threshing-floors, where the men may be seen tossing up the threshed grain with their wooden shovels. The wheat itself falls to the ground, while the straw or "chaff" is carried off by the wind,* and forms a heap at the distance of a few yards. It is removed in sacks, or in the carts which brought the crop to the floor, while the wheat or barley is further winnowed through sieves of different sizes, which clear out the small stones, lumps of earth, and foreign seeds.† The most troublesome of the latter are the tares (the weed commonly called *darud*, and in botany *Lolium temulentum*). Its kernels are somewhat smaller



Tares. (Matt. xiii., 25.)

than those of wheat, and the usual way to separate them is that adopted by the women, who sit at home with the children around a pile of wheat and patiently pick out the tares one by one. When allowed to remain in any quantity among the wheat, they mar the quality of the flour, and produce bitterness of taste, and even dizziness and nausea after eating. The accompanying illustration is a correct representation of this noxious plant, still called in Greek by its New Testament name.

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* Psa. i., 4.

† Isa. xxx., 24.

Our Saviour's parable narrated in Matt. xiii., 24–30, refers to facts respecting tares, which may need some explanation. When the tares first spring up, they are in no way distinguishable from the wheat; the difference, however, begins to appear as soon as the ear comes in sight. This difference, slight at first, grows more and more marked as the seed ripens, so that by the time the field has grown yellow the ears of wheat can be distinguished from the tares at a single glance. Hence it is clear that, had the servants attempted to "root up" the tares while they were yet green, they would have been liable to mistake them for wheat, and *vicè versa*. The mode of separation recommended by the Master also deserves our attention: it is the one resorted to when the tares are very abundant, rendering the process alluded to above altogether too tedious: the tares are first pulled up with the hands, bound in bundles by themselves, and burned, in order to prevent the increase of the noxious weed. Unlike the thrifty husbandman of the parable, who "sowed none but good" or picked "seed in his field," lazy farmers do not trouble themselves to pick the tares out of their seed-wheat before sowing it, claiming that tares are produced from wheat which undergoes a change by some unknown process during the progress of its growth.

While winnowing is going on, the tax-gatherer stands by and appropriates one-tenth as soon as the work is completed.* Under the oppressive system adopted by the Muslim governments of the present day, as under the Romans of old, the tithes are sold to the highest bidder, for a sum of money paid in advance, and the tithe-gatherers go through the land employing every device for the purpose of overreaching the cultivators of the soil, and obtaining from them more than their dues.† They are sustained in every dispute by the local authorities; and, worse than this, the farmers are strictly ordered not to thresh their grain before the tax-gatherers are ready, which is the means of additional extortions. We have known crops to remain heaped upon the threshing-floors for many weeks, and the distressed owners were not only obliged to watch them by day and by night, but had to contrive means to protect them from being wet by showers.

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* 1 Sam. viii., 15. † Luke iii., 13.

From the time that the crop begins to be laid upon the threshing-floor until it is entirely removed, after threshing and winnowing, every owner spends the night upon the edge of his heap, where he finds a convenient bed, and shelter from the night-breeze.* This he does for the purpose of guarding his property against thieves, and, when the floor is at a distance from the village, to save it from the depredations of the wild boars. In mountainous districts even stags and bears sometimes come down to get a share of the feast. Along the eastern side of Syria and Palestine, the farmers are often compelled to cut down the crops before they are fully ripe; for the Arabs come out of the desert and help themselves to the standing grain, which they load and carry away upon their horses.†

The wheat or barley is separated from the ear, when the quantity is small, by beating it out with a stick, and afterward throwing it up in the air and letting the wind carry away the stubble;‡ and with still smaller quantities, we not unfrequently see men rubbing several ears in the palms of their hands and blowing away the chaff while tossing up the grain, which they then eat unground and raw.§

We have described the chief processes of agriculture, those by which the cereals are obtained from the soil, for the support of the population; we must now briefly depict the mode of converting them into "bread, the staff" of life.‖

Windmills are very rare in Palestine, though they abound in other parts of Western Asia, especially along the coast and upon the islands. Flour-mills worked by water-power are common in mountainous districts, but the inhabitants of the greater part of the country, as well as all who dwell in tents, are obliged to resort to the hand-mill, with which every household is provided. The process of converting wheat or barley into flour—for the poorer classes now, as of old,¶ have often to be content with the barley—is as follows: a cloth is spread upon the ground, and upon it is set a flat circular stone about two feet in diameter, and two inches in thickness, whose upper surface is somewhat convex, and in the centre of which an iron peg is

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* Ruth iii., 7. † Judg. vi., 3, 4. ‡ Ruth ii., 17.
§ Luke vi., 1. ‖ Psa. cv., 16. ¶ 2 Kings iv., 42; John vi., 9.

firmly set upright. A similar stone, with a hole in its centre, is set upon the first, its lower surface somewhat concave, so that the two fit well together. Upon the upper surface of the latter, and near the rim, is inserted a wooden or iron peg six or eight inches high. A small pair of stones is turned by one person; the larger by two women,* who sit upon the ground



The Hand-mill. (Matt. xxiv., 41.)

face to face, with the hand-mill between them, having each a lapful of grain. Their right hands, the one above the other, hold the wooden peg, and thus they continually turn the upper stone, while the lower one remains stationary; the left hand, meanwhile, is busy taking grain and filling with it the hole in the upper stone, and the coarsely ground flour is constantly issuing from the side opening between the stones and falling upon the cloth.† In wealthy families this work is done by menials or slaves.‡ The blind also go from house to house to do the grinding, and thus earn a pittance.§

Every town is furnished with public ovens, where bread is

* Matt. xxiv., 41.
† Isa. xlvii., 1, 2.
‡ Exod. xi., 5; Lam. v., 13.
§ Judges xvi., 21.

made and sold. These ovens are built of baked bricks in the large towns, and occupy the innermost part of the little shop, whose street front consists of a large counter upon which the bread is sold. The oven itself is a chamber whose smooth floor, some four feet in diameter, is covered with flat bricks, and stands three feet above the ground. The sides and roof are arched, and the flue of the chimney is at the inner end. As the work commences at early dawn, since most of the sales take place in the morning, the workmen spend the night about the place, and may often be seen in the summer season sleeping at the side of the street.* The operation of baking begins by lighting a brisk fire all over the floor of the oven, and when its surface has become sufficiently heated the embers are raked out through the opening in the front, and the loaves of bread are laid and arranged on the floor of the oven with a long-handled wooden shovel. An iron door closes the oven until the baking is completed. These ovens are precisely of the form and size of the one discovered in Pompeii (dating from the second century of the Christian era), in which were found more than eighty loaves of bread calcined, but perfectly preserved. A little piece of dough is always kept for *leaven* from one baking till the next, when it is mixed in the meal by being worked in the dough, and thus the whole mass is leavened.† The size of a loaf varies in different places, though sold by weight. The more common form is round, somewhat flattened down, and five or six inches in diameter. A flat loaf is also in general use, half an inch in thickness, and twelve inches in diameter, round or oval in form. These kinds are leavened, and the last is often used instead of a dish or platter, upon which other food is placed. The more common bread used in all the interior, particularly in the rural districts, is a flat cake of unleavened dough, no thicker than a pancake, of a circular or oval form, and ten or twelve inches in diameter.‡ It is made of the flour obtained from the hand-mill, with the bran in it, and is baked in the following manner: Many houses are provided with an oven which consists of a hole in the ground some three feet deep, two feet in width at the top, and three at the bottom, and plastered within with clay. A brisk fire of branches and dried

* Hos. vii., 4. † Matt. xiii., 33. ‡ Exod. xii., 39.

grass is lighted upon the bottom, where there is a flue to admit the air.* The women, to whom exclusively belongs this branch of household labor,† take a piece of dough of the required size, and quickly and repeatedly passing it from one hand to the other, make it into a thin cake. It is then laid upon a round cushion which is introduced within the oven, where it is pressed against one of its sides, to which it adheres until it is thoroughly baked or toasted, when it is removed by the experi-

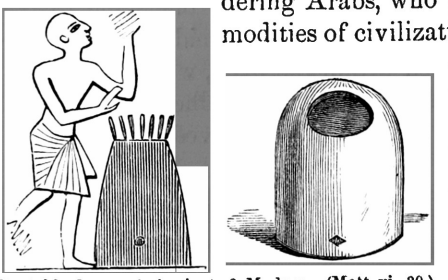


A public Oven. (Hos. vii., 4.)

enced hand of the baker. The dwellers in tents carry and use an oven of similar form made of earthenware, and glazed within; it is, however, covered and spherical at the top, and the opening is on one side, while a small hole at the bottom takes the place of the flue. The illustration on the next page exhibits the close resemblance between the modern and the ancient Egyptian portable oven. Some use iron platters, which are heated by being laid upon the fire; and others, again, place the unleavened cake directly upon the coals.‡ These unleavened cakes are crisp and palatable, but hard to digest; they are al-

* Matt. vi., 30. † Lev. xxvi., 26. ‡ 1 Kings xix., 6.

ways eaten soon after baking, and vie in unwholesomeness with our "hot biscuit." This form of bread is very convenient for the rude population of the villages, and especially for the wandering Arabs, who possess few of the commodities of civilization, and make these thin cakes answer the purpose of a plate, spoon, table-cloth, and napkin. We have often seen them tear off a piece of the cake, shape it into the form of a spoon, eat with it several large mouthfuls of thick soup or curdled milk, and when it had become too soft to be further used in this way, eat up their spoon, and proceed by making another, as often as required.



Portable Ovens: 1, Ancient; 2, Modern. (Matt. vi., 30.)

It is worthy of notice, that, whatever kind of bread is eaten, whether the large soft loaf, or the thin cake, it is never cut with a knife, but *broken* with the hand. Hence the expression so common in the Scriptures, as well as in other Eastern writings, "to break bread," *i. e.*, to eat.* It is deemed wrong to apply a knife to bread. So, likewise, great care is used not to let it fall to the ground; should it chance to do so, it is carefully picked up and set upon the shelf.

Flour is not the only thing, however, nor bread the only article of food, into which wheat is converted. It is soaked in water, or even boiled, and, after being thoroughly dried in the sun, is ground in a light hand-mill, and enters as an ingredient into a variety of dishes, besides being the rival of rice in the national dish of *pilaf*, or *pilaw*, when it takes the name of *boorghoor*. Wheat is often kept in pits, very similar to wells, some ten or fifteen feet in depth, which are carefully closed, and thus hidden from the predatory Arabs. There is, perhaps, an allusion to such a pit in 2 Sam. xvii., 19. However this may be, the corn the women spread upon the mouth of the well clearly indicates that the Hebrews were in the habit of preparing *boorghoor* in the manner we have described. "Parched corn" is referred to in Lev. xxiii., 14; Ruth ii., 14; 1 Sam. xvii.,

* Matt. xv., 36; Acts xx., 7; 1 Cor. x., 16.

17; xxv., 18; 2 Sam. xvii., 28. It corresponds to the *kaly* of the Arabs, and is obtained in the following manner: When wheat is being harvested, some of the green ears are thrown upon the coals of fire and roasted; they are but partially divested of the hull by rubbing between the hands, and are very much relished. Both roasted and raw wheat is eaten whole, a custom which is referred to in some of the texts mentioned above.

CHAPTER IV.

GARDENING AND CULTIVATION BY IRRIGATION.

THE dryness of the climate of Western Asia renders impossible the raising of vegetables and certain varieties of fruit-trees, except with the aid of artificial irrigation. Most of the country lies dry and parched during a considerable portion of the year, at which period the apparent sterility is only mitigated by hardy trees scattered here and there, and still more hardy bushes which cover extensive tracts. The presence of a river, or even a torrent, can generally be detected at a considerable distance by the appearance of a richer vegetation upon its banks. The location of a town, village, or hamlet is, in like manner, marked by the island of verdure which embosoms it; for Orientals always build near a river, spring, or well of water. The village itself is very generally unshaded by trees. The gardens are usually planted just outside; then come the inclosed vineyards, which are not watered;* and beyond all lie the cultivated fields, looking perfectly barren and dry as soon as the crop has been removed.

No country in the world depends upon artificial irrigation to such a degree as the land of Egypt.† Rain rarely falls beyond a short distance inland from the Mediterranean Sea;‡ within this narrow limit the only extraordinary feature in the hailstorm which constituted one of the ten plagues sent upon King Pharaoh, was its extreme severity;§ but to the inhabitants of Memphis and Upper Egypt so terrible and unprecedented a visitation must have produced the greatest awe and consternation.‖

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* 1 Kings xxi., 1.

† Deut. xi., 10, 11.

‡ Zech. xiv., 18.

§ Exod. ix., 24.

‖ Exod. ix., 28. The severity of the hailstorm which constituted one of Egypt's ten plagues is not without its parallel in the same lands in modern times. Not many years ago hailstones fell at Constantinople which are described as "of the size and shape of small saucers;" several persons were killed by them. But the most ter-

The river Nile rises far to the south, toward the centre of the continent, and in a region of mountains, forests, and extensive lakes, which have but recently been brought to the knowledge of the civilized world by the English travelers Speke and Baker. It is swollen at appointed seasons by the rains of those elevated tracts, and carries off the rich vegetable remains of a tropical climate. In Egypt the Nile is confined between high banks; a well upon an island near Cairo contains the nilometer, which consists of a pillar with a scale marking the height reached by the water. Experience has established both the average rise and that which is required to supply the wants of the land. When a sufficient height has been attained, the order is given, all the outlets are opened in the river banks, and the water is allowed to spread over the country. This now assumes the appearance of a sea, the villages, built upon the highest spots, alone standing out of the water.

The quantity of water brought down by the Nile, however, varies very much from year to year, doubtless owing to the amount of rain falling in the region of its head-waters and those of its tributaries. An unusually abundant as well an unusually scanty flood are alike detrimental to the crops. The ancients, therefore, devised and executed a stupendous work, by which they prepared and enlarged a natural basin, existing at a little distance from the western bank of the river, in Upper Egypt. They placed it in communication with the Nile by means of a canal and sluices; and the author of this work erected two pyramids, surmounted with colossal figures, in the middle of this lake, which covered a surface of more than five hundred square miles. The river begins to rise about the 20th of June. When beyond a certain height, the superfluous waters are made to flow into the above-mentioned Lake Fayoom; and when the flood has proved insufficient, the sluices of this lake are opened in December, and the country is supplied with the needed moisture. By this means the land is saved from the frequent recurrence of famine, to which it

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rific hailstorm we have heard of occurred at Marmaritza, on the southern shore of Asia Minor, in 1801, while the British fleet lay there. "On the 8th of February," says Sir R. Wilson, "commenced the most violent thunder and hail storm ever remembered, and which continued two days and nights intermittingly. The hail, or rather ice stones, were as big as walnuts."—CLARKE, 168.

would otherwise be liable. Lake Fayoom is universally attributed to one of the Egyptian kings, Mœris by name, who lived 1700 years B.C. This brings us to the time of Joseph, who appeared before Pharaoh to interpret his dream, in the year 1715 B.C. Hence it would appear that Lake Fayoom did not exist before the days of Joseph. Its use would doubtless have prevented the terrible famine of seven years, which compelled the Egyptians to sell their land, their cattle, and their very persons to their king.* Mœris must have been the Pharaoh who received the Hebrews into Egypt, and Lake Fayoom, which anciently bore the name of Mœris, after the king, was doubtless constructed, as far as it is a work of art, under the impression of that terrible dearth. The great and ancient canal which admits the waters of the Nile into Lake Mœris, and through which they are let out again upon the land, is to this day called by the natives Bahr Yoosoof, the water of Joseph—a further confirmation of the above statement.† It is interesting thus to trace not only the evidence of the truth of Scripture, but the influence of a great and good man upon the welfare of a nation during the space of thirty-five centuries.

There is another circumstance worthy of our attention. All the water in Egypt comes from the Nile, and though muddy at the best, long use makes the inhabitants prefer it to any other for drinking.

The annual flooding of Egypt by the Nile, and the deposition of the abundant earthy and vegetable matter with which it is then charged, has gradually raised the surface of the entire valley in which it flows. The proofs of this are numerous. All the ancient historians agree in stating that the Egyptians erected their principal buildings upon platforms so high that they could not be reached by the swollen Nile; but they now stand far below that level. It is calculated that the average rise of the surface of the whole valley of Egypt amounts to about five inches in a century.

Marcel, in his "Modern Egypt," makes the following interesting statement: "As the swollen waters of the river pass over its banks and inundate the land, the heavier or sandy

* Gen. xlvii., 15–23.

† Pococke, i., 60.

particles they bear are naturally deposited in its immediate vicinity, while the lighter and the vegetable substances are carried beyond, and spread over the face of the plain. When the river retires within its banks, its waters percolate through the adjacent sand into a sort of reservoir formed by the underlying clay; and the inhabitants obtain this water by sinking wells of moderate depth in the neighborhood of the river."* This account agrees with Pococke's statement, who says that "all over the land of Egypt, if they dig down lower than the surface of the Nile (in its vicinity), they find water, though the soil being mostly salt, the water is brackish."†

The foregoing quotations furnish a simple and rational explanation of a circumstance which would otherwise seem difficult of solution, in the Mosaic account of the ten plagues. When the waters of the Nile had been turned to blood, Pharaoh and his people, it is said, dug wells in the vicinity of the river, and, obtaining potable water, hardened their hearts, and refused to hearken to the warnings of the prophet—a statement which fully agrees with the present condition of things in that land.‡

The surface of Egypt is cut up by an infinite number of canals, which convey the water to every field and patch of cultivated ground. A great deal of the legislation both of ancient and modern Egypt had for its object the prevention or the settlement of disputes about the use of the precious element. This is found to occur wherever the supply of water is small, and the heat of the climate requires man to employ its aid in cultivating the ground. It is so even in pastoral countries. The herdsmen of Abraham and the servants of Abimelech strove together for the well of Beer-sheba,§ and the patriarch was obliged to separate from Lot, his nephew, on account of the disputes about water which arose between their respective herdsmen, in consequence of the great increase of their cattle.‖

The waters of the Nile are celebrated for their fertilizing power. In whatever spot they are allowed to leave their precious deposit, there a rich and vigorous vegetation springs up at once. The barren sand itself can not resist the fructifying in-

* "Modern Egypt," p. 72. † Pococke, i., 24. ‡ Exod. vii., 24.
§ Gen. xxi., 25. ‖ Gen. xiii., 5–7; xxvi., 17–22.

fluence. Were it not for this, the channels which conduct it to the sea would soon be choked with the movable sand, and the now fertile and flourishing Delta would be changed to a broad and uninhabitable morass. Green branches set into the banks sprout up, and soon become strong and thrifty trees, whose roots mingling with plants and reeds of spontaneous growth, give them a firmness which resists the wear of centuries. It is only by conveying the waters of the Nile to the Suez Canal through an ancient channel, which had for many ages been abandoned, that this interoceanic means of communication will be enabled to resist the encroaching sand of the desert.

The Egyptian husbandman sows his seed, according to its nature, at various stages of the inundation. Rice, for instance, is thrown upon the water when it has become confined within the limits of the little square beds into which the soil is divided for the purpose. These beds are separated by narrow causeways, or paths of raised earth, upon which the laborer treads, dry-shod, as he passes from bed to bed in the prosecution of his task. It is probably to this or a similar process that Solomon has reference when he says, "Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days.* "Waters," in the plural, sometimes indicates a division of water—that is, numerous rivulets or pools of water. These remarks are applicable not to Egypt alone, for the same process may be observed in all parts of Western Asia as far eastward as Persia, wherever cultivation is carried on by irrigation, and the land is divided into small beds.

The wealthy and influential in Egypt, both anciently and in our own day, have availed themselves of their position to open the sluices in the river or in the larger canals, in order to water their own lands, to the great detriment of their poorer neighbors. This abuse was carried so far, that the Emperor Arcadius, in the beginning of the fifth century, forbade it, under penalty of death or banishment to the oases of the desert. A similar practice is still common in all parts of Western Asia: the pashas of Constantinople bribe the keepers of the *Bends*, or public reservoirs of the capital, and thus obtain a large supply for their flower-gardens and the fountains that play in their

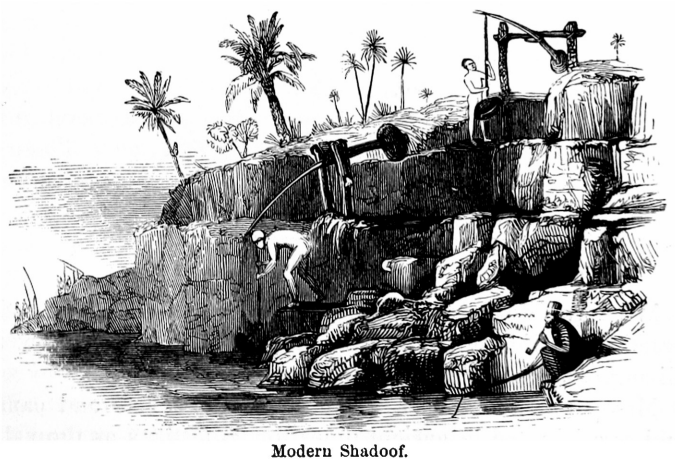
* Eccles. xi., i.

courts; while the poor are crowding at the public fountains, fiercely disputing possession of the slowly-trickling stream which is all that is left for the thirsty multitude.*

But the process of watering can not, in such a climate as that of Egypt, be confined to the yearly inundation of the Nile. Many plants require frequent irrigation during their growth.

The ancients are represented in their monuments as watering their gardens from adjoining tanks, by means of pails or pots suspended from the extremities of a yoke borne across the shoulders, or with pails simply held in the hand. This work is done at the present day by the lowest class of menials or servants, both in Egypt and in all the East, and Moses doubtless referred to this as a sign of the degradation to which the Hebrews had been reduced in the land of bondage.†

The usual mode, however, of watering, out of the season of the inundation, is by means of the *shadoof*, well described in



Modern Shadoof.

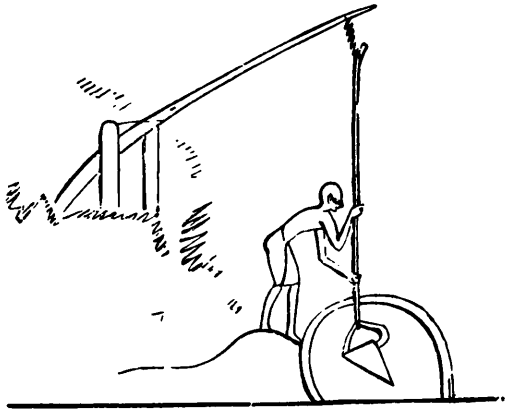
the following passage from Lane's excellent work on the Modern Egyptians: "The shadoof consists of two posts or pillars of wood, or of mud and canes or rushes, about five feet in height and less than three apart, with a horizontal piece of wood extending from top to top, to which is suspended a

* Prov. ix., 17.

† Lev. xxvi., 13.

slender lever formed of a branch of a tree, having at one end a weight chiefly composed of mud, and at the other, suspended from two long palm-sticks, a vessel in the form of a bowl made of basket-work or a hoop, and a piece of woolen stuff or leather. With this vessel the water is thrown up to the height of about eight feet into a trough hollowed out for its reception."*

This mode of raising the water of the river for the purpose of irrigation was practiced by the ancient Egyptians as by the moderns; and, in order to add another illustration of the preservation of ancient customs in the East, we give the reader pictures both of a modern and of an ancient shadoof, as it stands on the carved granite of the Pharaohs.



Ancient Shadoof.

We have dwelt at length upon the system of irrigation practiced in Egypt, because it is now, as it has ever been, the all-engrossing characteristic of that peculiar land.

Mesopotamia was also a country full of rivers and canals, and as celebrated in ancient times for its fertility as the valley of Egypt; but it is so no longer, and the causes which have wrought so great a change are worthy of a passing notice.

Mesopotamia consists of a great plain, which stretches from the Koordish Mountains on the north, and the Taurus on the west, to the Persian Gulf. It is watered by the Euphrates and the Tigris; the first of which, rising in the mountains

* Lane, "Modern Egyptians," vol. ii., 24.

of Ararat,* flows westward, then southward through Mount Taurus, and finally emerging into the plain, separates it from the Arabian desert as it courses south-easterly to the sea. The Tigris has its source near the same spot, but keeps closer to the Koordish Mountains, whence it receives some important tributaries, and gradually approaching the Euphrates, unites with it, forming a single channel which empties into the Persian Gulf.

These rivers are swollen every spring by the melting snows. Their waters contain no fertilizing power, like the Nile, which is charged with vegetable matter; but the land they irrigate, instead of being sand, like Egypt, is composed of the richest alluvial loam. The natural tendency of these rivers has been to overflow their banks in the spring, which, though productive of immediate fertility, has a tendency in the course of time to injure the land; hence the ancients, by an extensive system of canals and lakes, labored to prevent the inundation, and collected the surplus waters into reservoirs, whence they could be drawn out for the gradual irrigation of the fields and gardens.

The Euphrates, whose spring "swellings" greatly surpass those of the Tigris, has also a higher bed, and the ancients had cut a broad canal—now called "Nahr Melka" (the Royal Canal), with solid banks built of burned bricks, which eased the river of its excessive waters by conveying them to the Tigris. On the west side of the Euphrates an immense lake was dug—now known as the Sea of Kerbela—whose shores were also strengthened by embankments of bricks. This lake was connected with the river by a wide canal, and similarly, with another artificial lake of still greater extent, which communicated with the Persian Gulf. These two lakes received the water of the inundation and distributed it among the canals of the neighboring region. Moreover, both rivers were dammed in many places, for the purpose of drawing off the waters into the adjoining lands—a sluice being left in the middle of the dam for the passage of boats down the stream. Many of these massive walls may yet be seen, as well as the remains of numberless canals, some of which are used at the present day.† This

* Morier, i., 306.

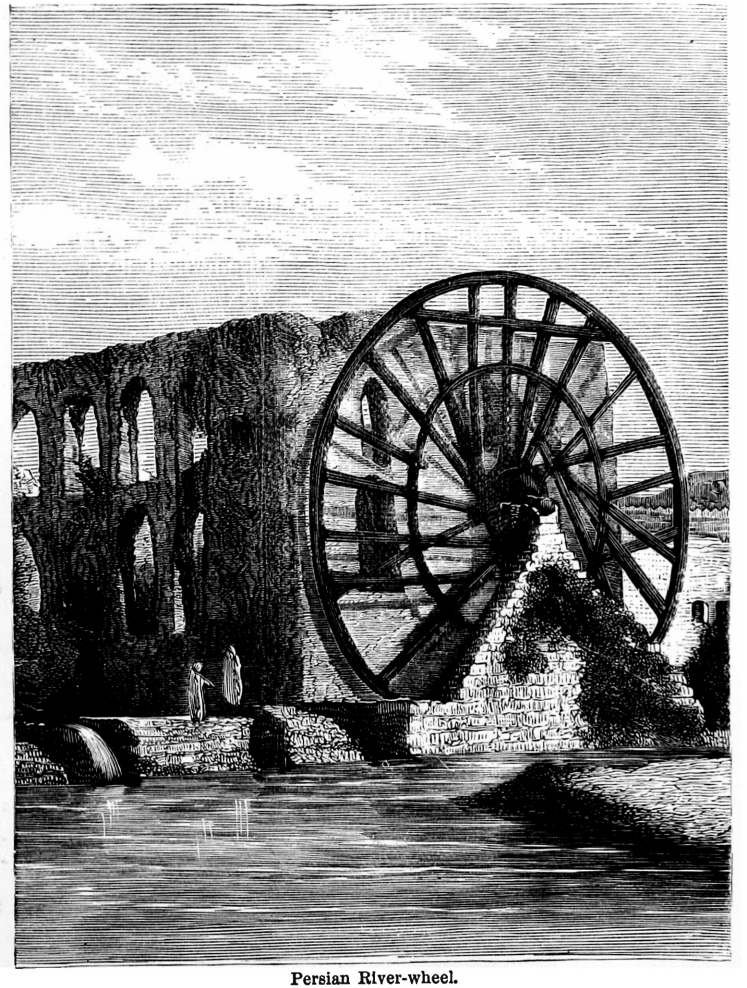
† Psa. cxxxvii., 1. In Jer. li., 36, the word translated "sea" evidently refers to canals: see also Jer. l., 38.

complete system of irrigation accounts for the extraordinary fertility of Mesopotamia, and particularly of Chaldea; for the ancient Greek writers are agreed in representing it as unsurpassed in any part of the globe. According to Herodotus, "there were two crops of wheat every year, yielding two hundred and even three hundred fold, the ears of wheat and barley often attaining the length of four digits, or three and a half inches."* But this remarkable land, possessing in itself such immense sources of wealth, was ill adapted for defense against an invading foe. As long as it was superior in civilization to its neighbors, and could contend with horses, chariots, and engines of war against rude barbarians, it formed one of the greatest empires the world ever saw. But it was reduced, and gradually devastated by the successive incursions of rapacious enemies. A careful observer of its history and present condition can clearly trace its ruin to the filling up of the canals and the destruction of the means of irrigation, by which all the lower part of the country has been changed into a vast swamp, and the annual inundations have gradually laid a covering of sand upon a soil naturally most productive.†

Though the rivers of Western Asia are liable to be greatly swollen by heavy rains and the melting of the snows upon the mountains, yet their usually high banks prevent extensive inundations; such floods as do occasionally occur produce injury instead of benefit to the surrounding regions. Various contrivances, however, are employed in order to apply their waters to the purposes of agriculture. Canals are sometimes cut in the soil, and small streams are turned off bodily in the desired direction. At Antioch, on the Orontes, at Hamath, higher up the same river, and in places in Asia Minor similarly situated, upon the banks of streams of considerable volume and current, the neighboring gardens are watered in the following manner: A large wheel some fifteen feet in diameter is set upright in such a way that the lower portion dips into the flowing stream. The extremities of the axle-tree are set on the one side in the solid bank of the river, which is strengthened with masonry, and on the other side in a frame of strong beams firmly planted in the river-bed, or in a stone-wall built

* Clio, 193.

† Isa. xiv., 23.



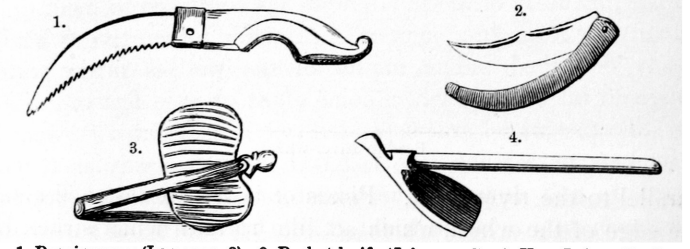
Persian River-wheel.

parallel to the river-bank. Pieces of board are fastened along the edge of the wheel, which act like paddles when struck by the current, causing the whole machine to revolve. Wooden buckets are fastened to the circumference, and these alternately dip into the water, rise to the top, and pour their contents into a trough, whence the water flows to the gardens. A low dam, built diagonally across the river, turns the entire stream upon "the wheel" when the water is low; while the swollen

stream sweeps over the dam without injuring the wheel. This mode of conveying water from a lower to a higher level was also practiced by the ancients; for it is spoken of as "the machine" by which the water of the Euphrates was raised to the summit of the "hanging gardens" of Babylon, a height of three hundred and fifty feet.*

When a perennial spring exists at the head of a valley, it is carried along its sloping side by means of a canal, and is thence drawn off into the gardens and orchards below. The remains of ancient works of this nature are numerous throughout the land, and indicate that massive aqueducts were often constructed for the purpose.

The privilege of using this water is paid for according to the quantity, which is measured by the size of the pipes and the number of hours daily during which it is allowed to run. This payment is made to the owner of the spring, who enjoys thence an important income.† The chief current, thus conducted through a garden, is made to flow along rows of such fruit-trees as most need its moisture, as the pomegranate, apricot, quince, orange, lemon, and mulberry, which are thus secured against the possibility of drought.‡ The ground is leveled and laid out in beds, each of which is bordered by a rim of soil wide enough for the gardener to walk upon. As each bed in turn is watered, a little heap of mud closes up the opening previously made, and the current runs on to the next bed. The instrument employed in doing this has the form of



1. Pruning-saw (Lev. xxv., 3); 2. Pocket-knife (John xv., 2); 3. Hoe (Luke xiii., 8); 4. Mattock.

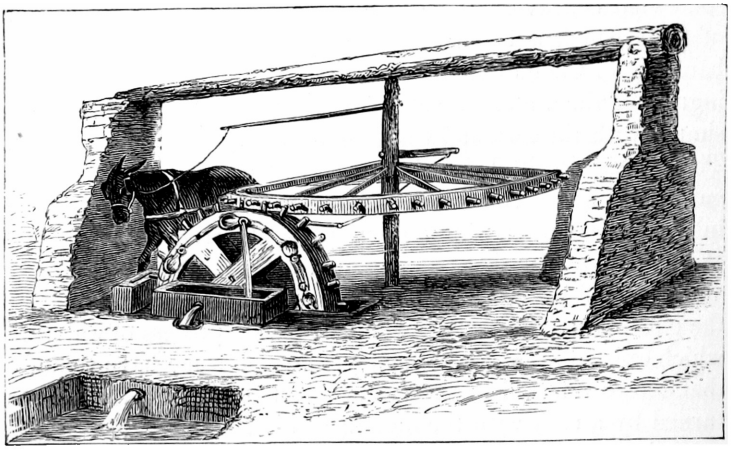
a hoe, but the handle is only two feet long, while the iron portion of it is much larger than that of our hoe, and is in shape

* Diod. Sic., lib. 2. † Judges i., 15. ‡ Psa. i., 3; Jer. xvii., 8.

somewhat concave. It takes up at once the requisite amount of mud, which is laid across the opening, and pressed by the bare foot of the gardener, so as completely to arrest the farther ingress of the water; much of the watering, however, is done simply with the feet, and this is particularly the case in Egypt. The process is alluded to in Deut. xi., 10, which indicates that gardening was a common employment of the Israelites while in Egypt, where nothing grew without irrigation; whereas Palestine, whither they were going, was watered by the rains and dews of heaven,* so that a resort to irrigation would be the exception. Philo, however, describes a process of watering which existed in Egypt in his day, to which some have thought that Moses referred in the passage just quoted. "A wheel is turned by a man with the motion of his feet, by ascending the several steps that are within it. But as, while he is thus continually turning, he can not keep himself up, he holds a stay in his hands, and this supports him; so that in this work the hands do the office of the feet and the feet that of the hands; since the hands, which should act, are at rest, and the feet, which should be at rest, are in action, and give motion to the wheel." In modern times, Niebuhr saw a similar machine in Cairo, which he terms *sakieh te-dur bir-regel* (a watering-machine that turns by the foot). The distribution of the water among the beds is doubtless referred to in Prov. xxi., 1.

But it is more generally the case that water can be obtained neither from a spring nor from a river, but only from a well, and the ingenuity of the inhabitants has contrived to meet this difficulty by a machine similar in principle to the river-wheel, already described. The mouth of the well is made wide enough to introduce a wheel some eight or nine feet in diameter. To this wheel are suspended two long ropes with wooden buckets, or earthen jars, fastened in such a way as to be carried up and down as the wheel revolves, each bucket in turn descending into the water, filling up, and being raised to the top of the wheel, where it is turned over, and discharges its contents into a wooden trough, and thence into the garden. This wheel revolves by means of a smaller horizontal wheel set in motion by a mule or an ass harnessed to a pole, which

* Deut. xi., 11.



Sakkieh, or Well-wheel.

walks blindfold round and round the well, to the incessant, monotonous music of the ungreased machine. This mode of garden irrigation is very extensively used in Western Asia: we have seen it in a few places near the sea-shore, with the substitution of a windmill for the rotating mule.

The soil in the fields is rarely manured, as already shown, but means are used to enrich the soil wherever irrigation can be employed.* For this purpose the manure of the horse, the ass, the sheep, and the goat is exclusively employed; while that of the ox and the camel is dried in the sun, and used as fuel.† By these means a garden is almost constantly in a productive state, a succession of crops being obtained from the same spot in the entire course of the year.

The vegetables more commonly grown in these lands are beans, of which there are several varieties, eaten in the pod and also dried.‡ The variety of peas cultivated is of large size, but used for culinary purposes only when dry. Beets, turnips, carrots, and radishes are of a fine quality, and produced in abundance. The okra is extensively cultivated; the black egg-plant and the tomato are favorites, and attain a large size. Squashes and gourds abound. One variety of the latter is made into bottles and dippers. The gourd is cut near the

* Luke xiii., 8. † Ezek. iv., 12–15. ‡ 2 Sam. xvii., 28; Ezek. iv., 9.

stem and dried, and the seeds being shaken out, it becomes a convenient bottle to keep articles which it is desirable to preserve from the damp, such as pepper, salt, etc. The gourd flask of the hunter keeps his powder most effectually dry, and is often tastefully carved. A rude guitar is also made of a large-sized gourd.

Another species of gourd grows to a length of three or four feet, and is two inches thick. It is made into a very agreeable preserve, cooked in honey or grape-juice boiled down. The gourd is a climbing vine of rapid growth, always trained to run up trees, trellis, and temporary booths, the size of its leaves affording a pleasant shade. The fruit, though large, is not heavy, and hangs on the vines, swinging and drying in the wind. The gourd-vine, however, is very liable to be destroyed by grubs or worms, which attack the root, in which case it withers and dries up immediately, owing to its light and pulpy texture.* The graceful form of the gourd, its golden blossoms, and the beautiful outline of its leaves, doubtless led to its adoption in Palestine as an architectural ornament, while the Greeks and Romans took the grape-vine for their model, whose bacchanalian associations must have been repulsive to the pious Hebrews. The gourd-vine entered into the architectural details of Solomon's Temple: "And the cedar of the house within was carved with knops" (in the margin *gourds*) "and open flowers" of the gourd-vine.†

Lettuce, parsley, mint, and other herbs, are in constant use.‡ The mustard-seed mentioned in Mark iv., 31, 32, grows on the edges of the fields in the Jordan valley, and often attains the height of a tall man. Our Lord's meaning was not that mustard was the smallest seed ever sown in a garden in his day. "Small as a grain of mustard" was doubtless a proverbial expression among the Jews. The Oriental tailor in our day says to his apprentice, "Make your stitches as small as sesame seeds," *i. e.*, as small as possible.

Lentils are produced in all parts of the country, and being a very nourishing article of food, they are favorites with the

* Jonah iv., 5–7. The words respecting the gourd, Jonah iv., 10, "which came up in a night," literally "which was the son of the night," is a poetical antithesis to "perished in a night." No gourd grows up in a single night.

† 1 Kings vi., 18.

‡ Matt. xxiii., 23.

hard-working man. They are cooked whole in the form of soup,* and are called in Arabic *ades*—the *adesh* which Esau bought with his birthright.

Cabbages are extensively cultivated, and cooked in a variety of ways. No garden is complete without its patch of onions and garlic, considered by an Oriental as among the necessaries of life. These are eaten crude, as a relish, when green, just as Europeans use celery and radishes. When dry, they enter into almost every dish. The dried and pressed beef, called *pasturma*, which forms part of the winter provision of most families, is strongly flavored with them. They are raised in abundance by the modern Egyptians. Judging from the strong predilection of Orientals for these vegetables, we can not wonder that the Israelites longed for "the leeks and the onions and the garlic" of Egypt. It is said that an eminent divine of one of our chief cities "used annually to retire to a secluded lake in the State of Maine in order to rusticate and *eat onions*." He must have thoroughly sympathized with the poor Israelites in their forty years' privation of their favorite vegetable!†

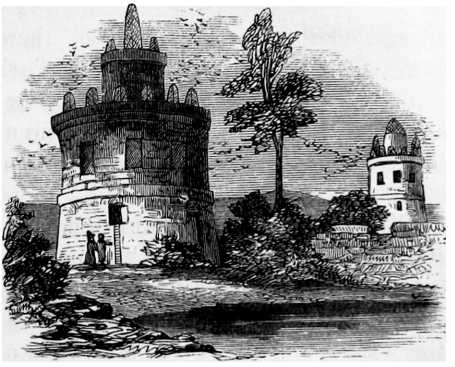
Before describing the cultivation of the vine, we should mention that nearly every garden has a vine growing in it, which is trained upon some wood-work or frame often set against the wall of a house; or it shades some smooth, grassy spot. Here, frequently, is the tank or basin from which the garden is watered, adorned, it may be, with a jetting fountain. This cool shade is a favorite resort for the family and friends, and here they often eat their meals. The vine is also sometimes trained so as to shade the flat-terraced roofs of the houses, where the heat compels many of the inhabitants to sleep at night.

We often meet in the Bible with the expression "dwelling under one's own vine and fig-tree,"‡ as a figure of prosperity, security, and domestic felicity; and it will be seen by the foregoing description, with that given farther on of the fig-tree, that an Oriental can not be said to enjoy the indispensable sources of pleasure and comfort when he possesses neither vine nor fig-tree, to whose grateful shade he may resort.

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* In French "potage" (Gen. xxv., 34). † Numb. xi., 5. ‡ Isa. xxxvi., 16.

Melons and cucumbers are generally raised in fields or patches of ground of a sandy nature, watered by the spring flood of an adjacent stream, or otherwise irrigated. They are exceedingly refreshing in the heats of Palestine and Egypt.* The water-melons of Jaffa are celebrated for their lusciousness. Cucumbers throughout the land are of a superior kind, and are often eaten raw and unpeeled, even by little children. Melon-patches are enriched with a sort of guano obtained from the dove-cotes; and for this purpose many villages possess a dove or pigeon house, often constructed of better materials than the peasants' own homes. It is built of stone of an oblong shape, twelve or fifteen feet in length, and twenty or thirty in height, without a roof; the walls are furnished on the inside with shelves of the same material. A small door on one side is kept locked, and the key is in the possession of the sheik of the village. The pigeons feed in the surrounding fields, and are protected by the whole community.



Pigeon-houses. (Isa. lx., 8.)

In Persia these pigeon-houses are large round towers, rather broader at the base than at the top, and crowned by conical spiracles through which the pigeons descend. The interior resembles a honey-comb, pierced with a thousand holes, each of which forms a snug retreat for a nest; they are often painted and ornamented externally.† The vast clouds of birds often seen flying in the air and alighting upon the pigeon-house are aptly described in Isa. lx., 8.‡ The value of the manure may be judged from the fact that the yearly income of a single pigeon-house often amounts to three hundred dollars. In the account of the siege of Samaria the distress of the inhabitants is aptly described, not only by the high price

* Numb. xi., 5, 6.

† Morier, ii., 140.

‡ The word "windows" here means the nests or "pigeon-holes" into which the interior is divided.

paid for food, but also by the expression "the fourth part of a cab (or about a pint) of dove's dung was sold for five pieces of silver;"* by which we understand that manure for the gardens, within the city walls which furnished most of the available food, was difficult to obtain on account of the siege.

The common pigeon of Palestine abounds in Egypt, Persia, and Asia Minor. His color is blue, fading into white below. He builds his nest in the rocks, ruins, old cisterns, and pigeon-houses of the villages. He is quite tame, for the natives never kill him. He is probably the original of the carrier-pigeons, tumblers, crested pigeons, and others, of which there is a great variety in Turkey. Carrier-pigeons are now found at Tarsoos; but no use has been made of their peculiar instinct since the days of the Crusaders.

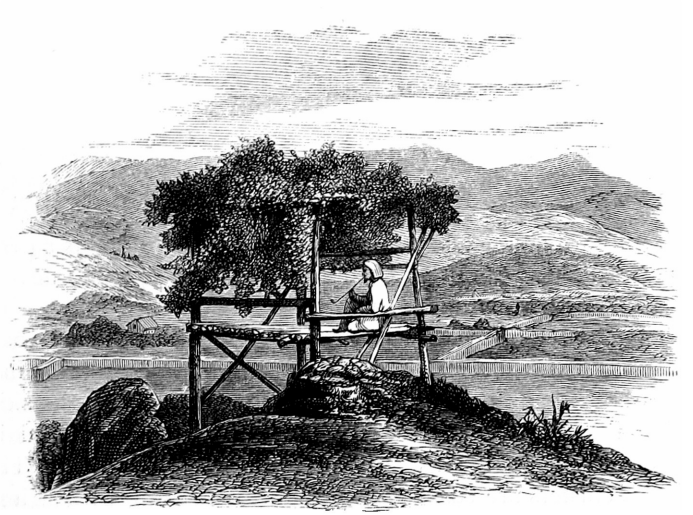


Common Pigeon of Palestine. (Isa. xxxviii., 14.)

When the melons begin to ripen, the owners build a "lodge," "booth," or "watch-tower," generally consisting of four poles set upright in the ground, supporting a platform sufficiently raised to escape the damp and secure an elevated position to the watchman, with a roof and walls of green branches to protect him from the burning sun and falling dew. Here sits the watchman day and night, with his cruse of water at his side, on the alert for thieves that might steal the fruit, and especially for the foxes, jackals, and hares, whose more stealthy inroads are difficult to guard against. After the crop has been gathered in, and the "lodge" left to weather the rains and storms of winter, it presents a peculiarly forsaken and desolate aspect. No simile could be more apt and striking to the Oriental mind than that of the prophet in Isa. i., 8.

The sugar-cane originated and still grows in Syria and Egypt, whence it is conveyed to all parts of Western Asia, and is esteemed a delicacy.† Two passages in the Old Testament appear to allude to it under the name of "sweet cane."‡ Some

* 2 Kings vi., 25. † Michaud, "Croisades," 211. ‡ Isa. xliii., 24; Jer. vi., 20.



Watchman's Booth. (Job xxvii., 18.)

have thought that these texts contain a reference to a sweet-scented reed found in one of the valleys of Mount Lebanon; but the expression "bought with money" seems to imply that it was an article of merchandise, like the sugar-cane at present; while the words "from a far country," immediately following the mention of Ethiopia, favor the idea of its coming from the Upper Nile.

CHAPTER V.

VINEYARDS, AND THE USES OF THE GRAPE AND THE OLIVE.

THE cultivation of the vine and of the olive-tree is so frequently alluded to in the Scriptures that we propose to devote particular attention to the subject.

The variety of grapes is very great, and each kind is best adapted to a special use. The fruit of the climbing vines matures later than any other; it is also the largest, and the skin being thicker, it keeps the longest, and may be obtained in very good condition as late as the month of March. The largest clusters are selected for keeping, and hung with strings from the ceiling of a well-ventilated room, which is sheltered from the winter's cold.

Of the fruit of the vines, which are kept low, the white varieties are generally preferred, for eating fresh, on account of their superior flavor and the delicacy of their skins. Orientals always eat the grape whole, as experience has taught them that the skins and the seeds contain an astringent quality which renders this fruit at once the most wholesome and harmless of any. The raisins of the white grape are also superior in delicacy to the other varieties. The finest raisins are made from a small grape containing no seed. It is called Sultanine, or the small Sultana grape, to distinguish it from the larger variety—not seedless—bearing the same name, which is also dried and its raisins highly esteemed. But the smallest raisin known is made from a diminutive black grape, grown exclusively upon the Gulf of Corinth. It is known in the West by the name of currants, or "Zante currants," being exported from the port of Zante. The Greeks call them *coranti*, which the French have translated into *raisins de Corinthe;* and being first introduced into England from France, the French name was abbreviated into *currants.* Our common garden currants* doubtless derive their name from their resemblance in size.

* Called in the East Frank *grapes.*

The process of curing grapes, or of converting them into raisins, is as follows: long strips of coarse cloth or matting are spread upon the smooth ground—the poor use the uncovered earth or rock—and the clusters, being cut from the vines, are dipped in very strong lye, and laid upon the cloth to dry in the hot sun, which requires several days. The raisins are then carefully separated from the dry stems, and packed in bags, ready for use. They are, however, in some parts of the country dried in clusters. This fruit is not simply an article of luxury; it forms an important part of the diet of the people, and is regularly laid up with other provisions of the household. A man often makes a meal simply of bread and raisins. Among the Hebrews it seems not to have been the custom to strip the raisins from the stems, but to dry them in the bunch, as is now done in the district of Malaga, in Spain.*

We have seen as many as thirty-five varieties of grapes raised in a single vineyard, but this is rare: three or four kinds is the ordinary limit.

The general practice, however, is to plant but one species of vine in a vineyard. If it be that kind whose grapes are to be eaten fresh, they are gathered in baskets as fast as they ripen, and loads of them are sent to market.† If it be a vineyard whose fruit is annually made into raisins, the whole crop is gathered and dried at once. When, however, the article to be produced is wine, with a certain quantity of sirup, the grapes are brought to the wine-press attached to the owner's premises, or they are furnished by weight to the wine-makers according to previous contract; the tax-gatherer meeting them at their entrance into the town, and levying the accustomed tenth part.‡

It is more commonly the case, however, that particular districts grow, with success, some particular kind of grape, for which they become celebrated. The Zante currants, grown on the Gulf of Corinth, have already been mentioned. The region of Smyrna is, in like manner, celebrated for the "seedless raisins" which it exports. The promontory of Chalcedon, opposite Constantinople, produces the finest edible grape to be found in

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* 1 Sam. xxv., 18; xxx., 12; 2 Sam. xvi., 1; 1 Chron. xii., 40.
† Neh. xiii., 15.
‡ 1 Sam. viii., 15.

the East, called the *chaoosh* grape. The land of Judah is still celebrated for the size and excellence of its grapes, which, as a general rule, succeed best in similar hilly districts. There was situated the Vale of Eshcol, whence the spies sent by Moses procured the huge cluster of grapes mentioned in Numb. xiii., 23, 24;* and it is affirmed that even now clusters of grapes are found in that locality weighing no less than twelve pounds; bunches weighing twenty pounds are often seen elsewhere. The cluster of Eshcol was borne with its branch upon a staff between two men, to prevent its being injured, and not on account of its great weight. We ourselves have seen single grapes of the size of the largest damask plum, and have found clusters measuring eighteen inches in length.† We have also counted more than seven hundred grapes on a single bunch.

Western Asia certainly ought to be the most favorable climate for the cultivation of this fruit, for it is indigenous to the soil; and the wild vines growing in some parts of Armenia and Georgia are of extraordinary luxuriance and size. Strabo speaks of wild vines in Armenia whose stems were so large as to require two men to span them, and some of whose clusters measured two cubits in length;‡ and Gmelin, in his "Travels through Russia and Northern Persia," states that "the wild vine on the shores of the Caspian Sea winds itself about the loftiest forest-trees, and its tendrils, which here have an arm's thickness, so spread and entangle themselves far and wide, that in places where it grows in the most luxuriant wildness it is very difficult to find a passage."§

The process of planting a vineyard and guarding it with a hedge or wall may be described as follows: the ground having been selected and traced, a ditch is dug along the outside, three or four feet in width and two in depth, the earth being piled upon its inner edge. Into this pile stout posts are firmly set, about four feet in height, and branches are twisted and woven in among them, making a thick and solid fence or hedge. A vineyard is cultivated for successive centuries, but the vines must be occasionally changed, and at such a time the ground lies fal-

* See Gen. xlix., 11.

† In Armenia grape-kernels are often seen an inch and a half, and two inches and upward, in length.—USSHER, 229, 273.

‡ "Geography," bk. ii., ch. i., § 14. § "Travels," vol. iii., p. 431.

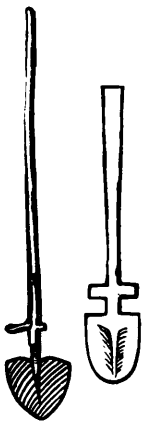
low for several years. The Hebrews left their vineyards untilled every seventh year, as well as the fiftieth or Jubilee year.* In process of time many wild plants, briers, and some few shrubs and trees spring up and grow within the shadow of the hedge, and, fed by the moisture collected in the ditch, make the inclosure more solid and capable of resisting incursions from man or beast. Still the husbandman is obliged, from time to time, to examine all parts of the hedge, and close up any gap or breach made by the foxes, jackals, badgers, hares, and still more diminutive hedgehogs.† It is only when the vineyard proves unproductive, or the quality of the grapes hopelessly bad, that the proprietor neglects the hedge and allows it to fall to pieces, so that even the wild boar may come and join in its destruction.‡ In regions where trees and bushes are not abundant for making a hedge, as is the case in many parts of Syria and Palestine, uncemented stone-walls, or walls built of mud-bricks dried in the sun, are used as a substitute. In Isa. v., 2, the word *fenced* means *walled.* In many parts also a wall is built of earth, in the following manner: a box, answering somewhat the purpose of a mould, some six feet in length and two or three in height, without top or bottom, is set up on the spot where the wall is to be erected, and the workmen, as they dig the ditch, throw the earth into this box; it is there trodden by the bare feet of their companions until the box is full, when it is lifted off, leaving the earth standing in a solid block, and is set up again at the extremity of this newly raised portion of the wall. The work then proceeds as before until the entire inclosure is completed. A second row of blocks is produced in the same manner: they set sticks across the top of the wall already erected, so as to support the box in this elevated position. When the circuit has been completed the second time, the annual prunings of the vine are laid across the top of the earthen wall, and made fast in their places with stones or mud, in order to preserve it from the action of the rain, and to render more difficult the intrusion of the lighter animals. The inclosure being complete, the ground is not plowed but dug, a process which has to be

* Lev. xxv., 4, 5, 11.

† Matt. xxi., 33.

‡ Psa. lxxx., 12, 13. Isa. v., 4–6.

renewed yearly in the spring. The instrument used for this purpose is the same as that employed in digging gardens; it is a sort of spade whose handle is six feet long, and the blade triangular, with the most prominent point downward, and sharp on the two sides. A little above the blade is fastened a piece of wood upon which the foot is set in driving it into the soil. The long handle gives a purchase, which enables the workman to lift up a large spadeful of earth, throw it forward, and break it up with a slanting stroke of his sharp, heavy hoe. This tool is similar to the bepalium of the Romans. It is customary for the men to work standing together in line, either for the purpose of emulation or that the strong men may assist the weak. This manner of digging is more thorough than what could be performed by an Eastern plow, and does less injury to the delicate roots of the vines. It takes a considerable number of workmen to dig over an entire vineyard, and this constitutes the chief expense attending the cultivation of the vine. During the whole season when vineyards may be dug, the common workmen go very early in the morning to the *Sook*, or market-place of the village or city, where comestibles are sold. While "waiting to be hired," they take their morning cup of coffee and eat a morsel of bread. The owners of vineyards come to the place and engage the number of laborers they need. These immediately go to the vineyard and work there until a little while before the sun sets, which, according to Oriental time, is twelve o'clock, so that "the eleventh hour" means one hour before sunset. We have often seen men stand in the market-place through the entire day without finding employment, and have repeatedly engaged them ourselves at noon for half a day's job, and later for one or two hours' work in our garden. In such a case the price has to be particularly bargained for, but it is more often left to the generosity of the employer to give whatever *bakshish* he feels disposed.*



Oriental Spade and Roman Bepalium. (Isa. v., 6.)

When about to plant a vineyard, the husbandman selects

* Matt. xx., 1–15.

and cuts the most promising branches of one year's growth of the variety best suited to his purpose. These he soaks for a number of days in spring water, until the buds begin to burst forth, when he plants them in rows some eight feet apart. The stems are generally not allowed to grow up higher than two feet, though in some places they are six feet high. The branches are pruned every spring, being cut close to the stem, and, when not needed to thatch the top of the earth-wall, are burned to put them out of the way, as they are too porous and light to serve any purpose.* Among the poor, dry vine-branches are used for heating the water for washing; and in the neighborhood of large towns they are made into charcoal, which does not give out heat enough for cooking purposes, but is used in the houses of the wealthy to heat the *tandoor*, a warming apparatus described elsewhere.

Besides the general pruning, however, as soon as the fresh branches have come out upon the stems, and show their young blossoms, the vine-dresser goes from one stem to another, cutting off the branches which bear leaves only, in order to afford more nourishment for those which give promise of fruit, and not sparing altogether even these last.†

In many instances vineyards are attached to the houses of a city or village, and are greatly prized as being accessible and enjoyable at all seasons of the year.‡ They are, however, generally situated at a short distance from the town, and each of them contains a "cottage," to which the family resort in the spring, at the time of the digging of the vineyards, and later at the time of vintage, except where it is customary to remain through the season in these summer-houses.§ These vineyards are generally planted side by side, a hedge or wall separating one from another.

Besides the principal thoroughfares which pass through them, there are narrower paths or lanes less frequented, because they lead to fewer vineyards, and many of these are shaded by trees. In the hilly country in Palestine, however, the paths among the vineyards being beds of torrents, which carry the rain-water to a lower level, have become channels worn deeper than the

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* John xv., 6; Ezek. xv., 2–4.

† John xv., 1, 2.

‡ 1 Kings xxi., 1.

§ Amos iii., 15.

adjoining ground; and when the tops of their boundary walls are thickly set with the cactus or other shrubs and trees, a shaded lane is produced which the passing traveler prefers to the wider thoroughfare. We have seen many of these lanes so narrow that two mounted travelers meeting in them could not pass each other, nor even turn round, and one must needs recede with his animal till he finds some side opening.*

As may be surmised, such places are favorable to deeds of blood and rapine, which are apt to occur during the summer season, for which reason the inhabitants generally remove to their vineyards, and return thence simultaneously for the sake of mutual protection.†

The summer-houses in the vineyards are properly denominated "cottages," for they are smaller than the more permanent residences, or "winter-houses," and more slightly built. They usually consist of a single room, but sometimes have a smaller apartment above, with a veranda in front. When the families remove thither, they carry only such furniture as they consider absolutely necessary, which is taken back to town after the vintage, the house remaining completely empty, the very doors and shutters being left open, or being removed to avoid robbery. As there is then in the vineyard nothing to attract either man or beast, the very gate is unfastened, and the accidental breaches in the wall or hedge are left to be repaired in the spring. It sometimes even happens that wild animals seek a refuge in the abandoned house, so that the forsaken vineyard, with its isolated "cottage," open through the winter to all comers, is an apt picture of desolation.‡

When a vineyard is large, however, and especially when it is situated in a lonely district, the structure to be occupied by the proprietor is often of a more solid character. There is no doubt that towers of solid masonry were formerly erected in such cases. We have frequently seen in Western Asia, and on some of the islands of the Archipelago, structures of a similar character, which were suggestive to us of the political condition of former days. They consist of a square building of solid masonry, rising to the height of forty feet, on the top of which is a story containing several apartments, well supplied

* Numb. xxii., 23-27. † Judg. xxi., 19-23. ‡ Isa. i., 8.

with windows, whose elevated position makes it the recipient of every breeze, and an excellent post of observation. The lower portion of this building has a small solid door, and a few narrow windows at a considerable height from the ground. It contains, among other things, a stable and a wine-press. These buildings are old, and their style quite out of date.* They are called by the Greeks *pyrgos*, the very word used by our Saviour in Matt. xxi., 33; Mark xii., 1. The Septuagint uses the same term in Isa. v., 2. The Turks denominate them *koolah*, which means a country house, but is derived from *kaleh*, a tower or castle. They have another word for country or pleasure houses, when these are not in an isolated position, *i. e.*, *yali*. The word πύργος, *tower*, is also used in Luke xiv., 28, in such a connection as to indicate an expensive building like the *koolah*, rather than a slight structure.

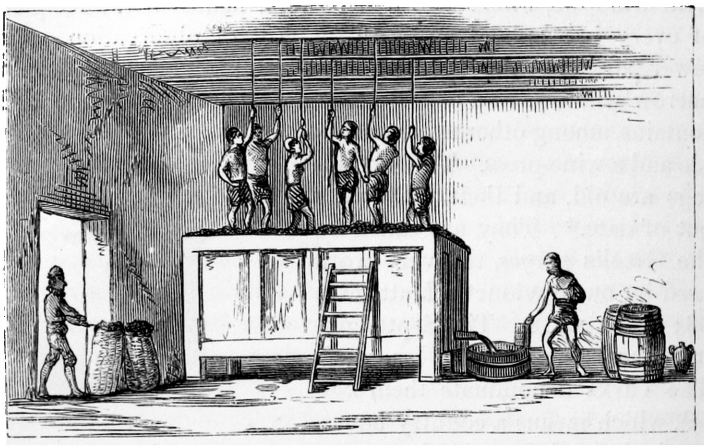


Pyrghos, koolah, or Tower in the Vineyard. (Isa. v., 2.)

Some of the passages above mentioned speak also of a wine-press dug† out of the rock, probably outside of the town. We are not aware that such wine-presses are made at the present day, though they are often constructed of masonry; but many ancient ones are still in use. We must bear in mind that the ancients hewed buildings, temples, and sepulchres out of the solid rock, as abundant remains fully testify. In the construction of their wine-presses, advantage was taken of a favorable form of the rock, usually limestone, in order to hew an oblong or square excavation in the form of a shallow tank, with a hole in one side near the bottom, through which the grape-juice ran into a smaller basin. It was in such a press, doubtless, that Gideon threshed his wheat in order to conceal it from the marauding Midianites.‡

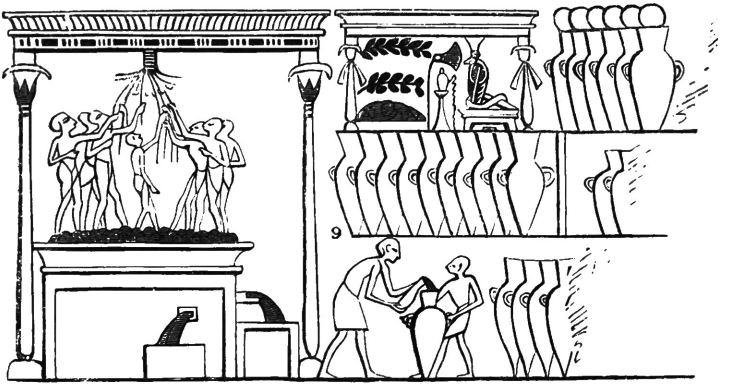
The wine-press now used in Western Asia, however, is either built of masonry or of wood. In the latter case it is a box six feet by ten, and four feet in depth, and set up several feet above the ground. It has a hole in the centre of one side, where a

* Thevenot, Part I., 99. † Or hewn, Hebrew. ‡ Judg. vi., 11.



Modern Wine-press. (Hos. ix., 2,)

large vessel or trough is placed to receive the grape-juice. This box is set in the corner of the basement, and from the ceiling above hang cords for the support of the men, while a ladder resting against the side of the press enables them to climb into it. The ancient Egyptians used the same kind of wine-press.*



Ancient Egyptian Wine-press.

The only difference appears to consist in this, that the Egyptians set up theirs out-of-doors, building a slight roof over it to protect the grapes from the influence of the sun. Every thing

* Wilkinson, i., 46.

in this picture reminds one of the modern press, excepting the capitals of the pillars; for through all Asia Minor the principal timbers of wooden houses are laid upon large pebbles, as in this sculpture. The skull-cap now worn by the poor in Egypt is also, as here, often represented in the ancient monuments.

Instead of a "cottage" or "tower" in a vineyard, there is sometimes a high booth or rude structure, such as we have described in speaking of the melon-fields, page 109.* From this, as from the top of the tower, or from the flat roof of the cottage, the proprietor is obliged to watch over his fruit as soon as it begins to ripen, in order to preserve it from the inroads of the four-footed beasts, which have a relish for it. These, in the vicinity of the sea-shore, are chiefly jackals, an animal more homely, but no less keen-scented or cunning than the fox, which replaces it in the interior.† These creatures are very sly, and come only in the night. What Europeans have sometimes taken to be "scare-crows," consisting of the skeleton of a horse's head stuck upon the end of a pole, are not intended as such, but are merely used to keep off the "evil eye;" the "scare-fox" consists of a string tied between two poles, with bits of tin hung upon it which jingle in the wind. A more effectual scare, however, is a common iron trap laid before the hole in the hedge or wall through which they are wont to pass.

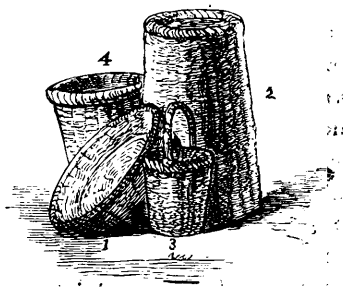
As the grapes are ripening, a double watch has to be kept. Men go about through the night striking upon vessels of tin or brass, or firing guns in the air. Boars and bears are more disagreeable customers, and are generally avoided: they are confined, however, to the neighborhood of the mountains.‡

The vintage is always a season both of activity and rejoicing.§ When the grapes are fully ripe, men, women, and children being hired for the purpose by the wealthy—while the poor help one another—turn into the vineyards and gather them in baskets, which the men carry to the wine-press, if near by, but if at some distance, put them in deep and narrow wicker-baskets and load them on mules and asses. From this circumstance arose the expression so often used by Moses in addressing the children of Israel, "thy basket and thy store;" for

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* Job xxvii., 18.
† Cant. ii., 15.
‡ Psa. lxxx., 13.
§ Isa. xvi., 10.

not only are grapes gathered in baskets, both for the vintage and for the use of the family, but olives and all manner of fruit and garden vegetables are collected in the same way.*



Oriental Baskets. (1. Gen. xl., 16; 2. Deut. xxviii., 5, 17; 3. Jer. vi., 9; xxiv., 2; 4. Acts ix., 25.)

The grapes are poured into the press, and as soon as it is sufficiently filled the treading begins. The men who engage in this work wash their limbs in water kept at hand for the purpose; they run up the ladder, spring upon the fruit, and, seizing the suspended ropes, begin vigorously the task of trampling. There is always great shouting and singing, probably produced by the fumes of the new wine and the free libations in which, on these occasions, they are apt to indulge.† The expressed juice flows into the trough, whence it is transferred to other vessels with a dipper.‡ The words of Rev. xiv., 20, are elucidated by the expression, "the blood of grapes," in Gen. xlix., 11.

The first juice which is drawn off from the grapes by their own weight as they lie in the press is considered the best, and is usually mixed with fine flour, boiled down to a thick paste, then cut into cakes, and dried in the sun. It is sometimes flavored with rose-water or cinnamon. Almonds or walnuts are also strung and dipped in the hot, soft paste, exactly as candles are made, and when sufficiently coated over they are hung in the sun to dry. But the grape-juice is almost exclusively employed, especially by the Muslims, who are forbidden the use of wine by the Koran, in making *dibs*, as the Arabs call it, which is a very palatable sirup obtained by boiling down the grape-juice. This is not only eaten with bread,§ but enters into the confection of a great variety of dishes, and takes the place of sugar, an article almost unknown except on the sea-board. This sirup was much used by the ancients.‖ It was mixed by them, as now, with milk and other articles of food. In Gen. xliii., 11; Psa. lxxxi., 16; Ezek. xxvii., 17, the word

* Deut. xxviii., 5, 17.
† Jer. xxv., 30; xlviii., 33.
‡ Neh. xiii., 15; Job xxiv., 11; Isa. xvi., 10; Rev. xiv., 20; xix., 15.
§ Pococke, i., 58.
‖ Pliny, xiv., 11.

debesh does not indicate the ordinary bee honey, but grape sirup, and is the modern *dibs*. It is probable that the proper rendering of the expression, "A land flowing with milk and honey,"* would be, a land flowing with *leben*† and *dibz*.‡ The words are equivalent to "a land abounding in flocks, and thickly planted with fruitful vineyards."

Wine is not so extensively manufactured now in Western Asia as it was in ancient times, since the Christians who make and use it constitute but a small part of the population. It is probably for this reason that the quality is generally inferior. The success, however, which individuals have met with in manufacturing wine of superior quality, proves that the grapes have not deteriorated in this respect; and the wines of particular districts, such as Lebanon, Cyprus, Samos, Tenedos, and the Muscatel of Smyrna, are as celebrated as in ancient times.§

In making wine the grape-juice is poured into large vessels, or into jars half buried in the earth in a cool part of the premises. A little lime is thrown in, which is supposed to control the process of fermentation, and to prevent its turning to vinegar. This seems particularly necessary with the lighter wines. Wine is not generally used until after its fermentation is completed; in many parts of the country, however, it is put up in the skins of animals, chiefly goats, which are translated "bottles" in our version. The manner in which these bottles are prepared is as follows: As soon as the animal is killed an opening is made in the skin large enough to introduce the lips, and a man begins to blow between the skin and the flesh, until the two are completely separated from each other throughout. The head and feet are then cut off, and the entire body of the animal is drawn out of its skin through the opening at the neck. The hair is sometimes partially removed, and the skin tanned. In Persia the skins are saturated with pitch. The opening at the neck is used for filling and emptying the vessel, while the four feet are tied or sewed up. The grape-juice which is to undergo the process of fermentation is put into skins, which are either entirely new or which have been carefully examined and found able to withstand the pressure.‖

* Exod. iii., 8, etc. † Sour milk, the only form in which milk is drunk.
‡ Grape sirup. § Ezek. xxvii., 18; Hos. xiv., 7.
‖ Job xxxii., 19; Matt. ix., 17; Mark ii., 22; Luke v., 37, 38.

These skin bottles have been used in the East from time immemorial, and are still employed throughout the country as far as Persia, also in Northern Africa, and even in Spain—a relic, doubtless, of the Moors.

Instead of making wine of the grape-juice as formerly, great quantities of grapes are yearly consumed in the distillation of *arrack*, or *rak-ée*, a strong spirit, frequently flavored with gum mastic, and extensively used by Mohammedans, whose Koran does not forbid this liquor, which was unknown in the days of their Prophet.

The ancients sought to increase the strength of their potations by a mixture of spices with their wine; and so likewise do modern Orientals.* But to our country seems unfortunately to belong the unenviable notoriety of making and using drugged wines, if that may be called wine which often possesses not a particle of the juice of the grape!

Most of the drunkenness of the East is produced by the use of *arrack*, wine being generally taken in connection with meals† and often mixed with water.‡ Arrack has been substituted for wine in some parts at marriage feasts, and all the guests are expected to drink at least to the health of the bride and the bridegroom.§

It would seem by the foregoing statements relating to the various uses of the grape, that the vine is one of the most valuable productions of Western Asia. Many a family possesses nothing in the world besides a vineyard and a small dwelling in the adjacent village or town, and this is their means of subsistence. All, even the poorest inhabitants of districts where the vine abounds, have a vineyard of greater or less extent, which supplies both the necessities and what they deem the luxuries of life, and enables them to withdraw for a time from the less healthful atmosphere of the village or town. The vineyards in many localities, moreover, contain a large number of fruit-bearing trees, such as the climate favors—the cherry, apple, pear, apricot, fig, and various nut-trees, from the tall shady walnut to the diminutive filbert. These fruits all add to the store of the household, being suspended in bunches from

* Psa. lxxv., 8; Prov. xxiii., 30; Cant. viii., 2. † Matt. xxvi., 26, 27.
‡ Prov. ix., 2, 5. "Mingled" here has the force of diluted.
§ John ii., 2, 3, 10.

the ceilings, or ranged upon shelves running around their rooms, for winter provision, while the nuts are put up in bags till quite dry, then packed in jars. We have been informed by the proprietors of vineyards of about eight acres in extent, producing the finest quality of raisins, that they netted one thousand dollars a year, although the expenses were extremely high.

Vineyards are, however, often let out to husbandmen either for one or several years.* The price or hire is always paid in kind, and amounts to one-half the produce of the vineyard.† This is the universal system of farming out vineyards, gardens, and fields throughout Western Asia, and Churchill describes it as particularly prevalent on Mount Lebanon.‡ We have, however, personally known many cases in which the hire was paid in money.§

We should not omit to mention that the same custom prevails in Turkey at the present time as existed anciently among the Hebrews, namely, that a stranger may "eat his fill" of the fruit of a vineyard or orchard, but may not carry any away.‖

It must not be supposed, from the foregoing account of the labor required by a vineyard, that the process resembles that of sowing seed and reaping the harvest; on the contrary, there is no occupation that makes more unceasing demands upon the time and attention of the husbandman. Remarking one day to the wife of one of this industrious and laborious class that her husband was scarcely ever at home, but always reported to be "at the vineyard," she replied: "The vineyard is like a baby; it needs constant tending, if one would reap any benefit."¶

After the crop has all been removed, the cattle and beasts of burden, and oftentimes whole flocks of sheep and goats, are let into the vineyard to browse upon the leaves and the weeds which spring up with the early rains of autumn.** Should these animals come in at any other time than this or the winter season, they would do as much harm as though let into a field of grain.††

We now turn to the preparation and uses of the oil. The

* Matt. xxi., 33.
† Matt. xxi., 34, 41.
‡ Churchill's "Mt. Lebanon," vol. i., p. 36.
§ Cant. viii., 12.
‖ Deut. xxiii., 24.
¶ Prov. xxiv., 30, 31.
** Wilkinson, i., 45.
†† Jer. xii., 10.

people occupying the countries around the Mediterranean depend in a great measure for their comfort and livelihood upon the produce of the olive-tree, whose utility is quite as great as that of the vine. This tree has been from time immemorial so abundantly cultivated in those lands that, for aught we know, it is indigenous to them all. At any rate, their soil and climate must be highly favorable to its cultivation. In Western Asia it is never found at a great distance from the sea, nor at a higher elevation than two thousand feet; for it exists nowhere on the plateau of Asia Minor, which is two thousand feet high in its lowest part, but abounds on the lower ground which lies between the plateau and the sea. On Mount Hermon, however, the olive-tree is found at an elevation of three thousand feet, and it flourishes in Mesopotamia and some of the valleys of Koordistan.*

This tree is not sowed: it grows spontaneously among the bushes which cover extensive portions of the country, having doubtless sprung up from seeds dropped by the birds; and when a clearing is made by cutting down and uprooting the bushes for the purpose of cultivation, the wild olive-trees are left standing where found, and are grafted by the husbandman. They, however, are sometimes removed thence to olive-yards or orchards, where they are planted in rows. These plantations are often very extensive. The trees that give its name to the Mount of Olives are scattered sparsely over a great part of that memorable height, and a large portion of the lowlands near the shores of Palestine, from Beirut to Sidon and in the neighborhood of Jaffa, is covered with olive-groves; indeed Palestine, both in ancient and modern times, has not only been able to supply its own wants, but has also exported its olive-oil to neighboring countries.† Moses truly described it to the Israelites as "a land of oil olive."‡

Where the trees are planted, as they usually are in these groves, so close as just not to interfere with one another's growth, the ground on which they stand is simply plowed once a year; but it is frequently sowed with wheat or barley when the trees are farther apart.

The olive-tree is of so enduring a character, and its produce

* Fletcher, 103. † Ezek. xxvii., 17; Hos. xii., 1. ‡ Deut. viii., 8.

is so valuable, that it is held as property separately from the field in which it grows, so much alone of the ground belonging to the owner of the tree as is needed for digging; for it is essential to the abundance of the crop that the soil be annually dug around the roots in order to admit the moisture of the winter rains. Such digging may, however, be neglected for many years without essentially injuring the tree, the only effect being a diminution of the crop for the time being. We have repeatedly seen title-deeds expressed in a form somewhat like the following: "Mohammed declares that he has sold to Ali his thirty-two olive-trees which stand in the field of Osman," etc. A field not unfrequently contains olive-trees which belong to several different persons.

This appears to be a very old custom, for we meet with it in the narrative of the purchase by Abraham of the field of Machpelah, with its cave, from Ephron the Hittite; we find therein the notable specification that every tree in that field, even to the very edge of it, became Abraham's property.* These trees were perhaps chiefly olive or other fruit trees, about whose distinct ownership Orientals are very particular. But it also shows that, as now, the principle of distinct ownership was admitted.

The "wild olive-tree" has a small dry berry, and must be grafted before it is useful to man. Among the grafted olives, however, there are differences, marked by the name of the district in which each variety is produced in the highest perfection. The process of grafting is referred to in one of the most interesting passages in the writings of St. Paul.† Some commentators, ignorant of the cultivation of the olive, have supposed that the process of grafting was inverted in the case of this tree, so that, instead of grafting a branch of the good upon the wild stock, a branch of the latter was grafted upon the good stock. St. Paul distinctly disavows such a supposition, for he declares that the grafting of the Gentiles upon the Church of God was "against nature." Indeed the olive-tree grows to so great an age, that the old wild root sometimes conquers the better graft, so that the fruit deteriorates and the tree must needs be grafted anew.

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* Gen. xxiii., 17, 18.

† Rom. xi., 17–24.

In appearance this tree is unlike any other. Its trunk is gnarled and uneven, and grows more knotty and stout with age. It is not deciduous; its leaf is small, elliptical, and of a dark dull green on the upper side, while underneath it is of a pale gray, almost white.

When the tree has attained its perfect growth, it equals in height a common apple-tree; but its form is so regular, and its lower branches spread out in so complete and graceful a circle, that it possesses a beauty all its own, unchanged by the seasons of the year, and enhanced by the knowledge of its unsurpassed utility to man.* The psalmist compares children to olive-plants round about the table, because there they are seen collectively, and their merry faces correspond to the beauty and the promised fruitfulness of young olive-trees.† The psalmist could not have had in view the *branches*, for they never grow into independent trees; nor the *shoots*, or *suckers*, which spring from the roots, for these are always cut away as injurious to the tree.

Time, however, brings about great changes even upon the long-lived olive-tree. The trunk becomes more knotty and massive, but its core dies away and leaves an empty opening within; the branches decay and fall to the ground; the outer portions of the trunk gradually fall away, until you often see but a strip of the old stock clinging tenaciously to life, and still nourishing a little branch or two, which to the last bears its contribution to the necessities of man. We do not suppose, however, that there are sufficient data to fix the age of the olive: all the old trees being decayed in the centre, it would be impossible to count the rings which indicate the annual increase of the tree, and by which alone its age could be known with any degree of certainty. We do not believe in the myth which identifies certain olive-trees now growing at the foot of Mount Olivet as having stood there in the time of our Lord's passion, for Josephus distinctly states that at the siege of Jerusalem by Titus the soldiers cut down every tree around the city, "for a distance of ninety furlongs,‡ in order to raise banks against its walls; and of all the pilgrims who have described their visits to Jerusalem during the last one thousand two hun-

* Jer. xi., 16; Hos xiv., 6.

† Psa. cxxviii., 3.

‡ "Jewish War," bk. vi., ch. i., § 1.

dred years, the first to refer to olive-trees as marking the site of Gethsemane are Maundrell and Quaresmius, not more than three centuries ago, one of whom upholds while the other opposes the opinion of their great antiquity. It has been supposed by some that the name of Gethsemane indicated that it consisted of an olive-grove. This, however, we can not admit, for it is distinctly declared to have been a "garden,"* and



Aged Olive-trees.

though an olive-tree or two sometimes grow in such places, yet gardens are planted either with vegetables or fruit-trees, and always imply irrigation. The narrative implies that there was a small house or cottage on the premises, doubtless occupied by the gardener and his family.† This is always the case with a garden, but never with an olive-yard. The name Gethsemane, which signifies "an olive-press," does not necessarily indicate that there was such a press within—indeed, being

* John xviii., 1.

† Mark xiv., 51, 52.

a garden, this was not likely to be the case. It simply points to the fact than an olive-press stood near this house by the road-side, which gave the place its name.

The wood of the olive-tree is of a light reddish or yellowish hue. It is irregularly grained, and not heavy, though firm. It was used by the ancient Hebrews, as now, for ornamental carved work. The two cherubims within the oracle of Solomon's Temple that stood "each ten cubits high," were made of olive-wood, so also were the doors and the posts. "The carved figures" of cherubim and palm-trees, and open flowers "upon all the walls of the house round about, within and without," were probably of the same material, and this entire wood-work was overlaid with gold.* Various articles are now made of olive-wood at Jerusalem, and sold to travelers as curiosities.

The blossoms of this tree are small, white, and very numerous. They are easily shed, and a strong wind often strews the ground with them, presenting the appearance of frost. The crop of olives is frequently thus greatly diminished, or well-nigh destroyed.†

The fruit of the olive consists of an oval berry about an inch long, containing a seed or stone of considerable size. It is black when ripe, but is often picked green, and after soaking in brine is eaten thus or cooked with meat. The largest and first ripe olives fall of their own accord to the ground, and are preserved in brine or oil for eating.

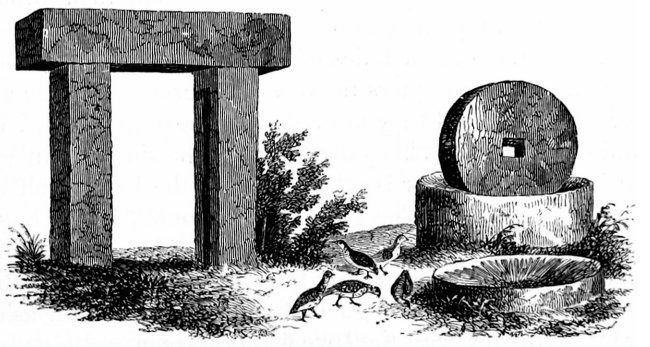
Where there are extensive plantations of this tree, belonging, as is generally the case, to a number of proprietors, no picking is allowed, nor shaking of the trees, until the time appointed by the authorities, which occurs in November or December. The public crier goes forth and announces the day on which the *gathering in* is to commence. Men, women, and children then enter the olive-yards. Some climb into the trees and shake the boughs, while others stand below and beat off the fruit with long, slender poles.‡ The poor are often seen, after the gathering in of the crop, going from tree to tree and collecting the few olives that may have been left.§ A full crop is obtained only every other year, which some attribute to the

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* 1 Kings vi., 23, 31–33.
† Job xv., 33.
‡ Isa. xxiv., 13.
§ Deut. xxiv., 20; Isa. xvii., 6.

injury the trees receive by beating and shaking. The produce is quite remunerative, for a large tree in a good season yields ten to fifteen gallons of oil, and an acre planted with olive-trees in good condition bears a crop worth, in Palestine, £20 sterling, or $100. All the fruit, however, is not converted into oil. The finest berries are usually put up for family use or sent to market, and many a laborer goes to his work in the morning carrying for his noon meal a few olives rolled between thin sheets of bread.

The olive-press is to be seen in all the villages and towns in whose vicinity this tree is cultivated. It stands in the square of the village, or by the roadside, or where several ways meet.

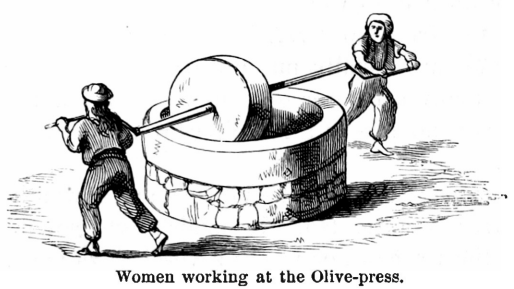


Ancient Olive-press. (Deut. xxxii., 13.)

This machine was formerly, like the wine-press, hewn out of the solid rock. Several are yet to be seen in a good state of preservation at a ruin above Tyre, near Kanah, where the olive must have been successfully cultivated more than twenty centuries ago, but has now disappeared from the surrounding region.* The modern olive-presses are made partly of masonry, and are essentially of the same form as the ancient. A circular stone, some six feet in diameter, and one foot in thickness, is dug out, somewhat in the shape of a pan. A hole is made at one side for the escape of the oil into vessels placed to receive it. This large stone is set upon a foundation of masonry so that its rim stands three or three and a half feet from the ground. A stone roller, often a fragment of an ancient pillar,

* Thomson, "The Land and the Book," vol. i., p. 71.

about three feet in length, and eighteen inches to three feet thick, is laid in this flat-bottomed basin, so that one end of it nearly touches the side. The roller is perforated from end to end, and through the hole a stout stick is passed, which terminates at either extremity with a handle. The olives being collected in baskets are first salted, then brought to the press, and poured into the stone basin. Two men or women now grasp the handles of the axis of the roller, and as they walk around the press the olives are crushed by the ever-revolving stone, until they are reduced to a pulp mingled with oil and olive seeds. This pours through the side opening, and is received in vessels, or is taken up from the basin itself with dippers and spoons. The pulp is then poured into a bag of coarse canvas or hair-cloth, hot water is added, the mouth is carefully sewed up, and the bag thus filled with crushed olives and water is laid in a trough or basin of smaller dimensions, where it is trodden with the bare feet of women and girls until the oil has entirely oozed or strained through and flowed into vessels waiting to receive it, leaving in the bags only the pulp, skins, and stones of the olives. In some places the crushed olives are put into small baskets, and these under a weighted beam, which crushes out the oil into a stone trough; and this process appears to have been known to the ancients.*



Women working at the Olive-press.

The form of the ancient oil-presses already mentioned is the same as just described, and indicates that the process of extracting the oil was identical with the modern. This process is alluded to in numerous passages in the Scriptures. It was prophesied of Asher, on the skirts of Mount Lebanon, where the olive-tree abounds to this day, that he should "dip his foot in oil,"† *i. e.*, that his land would abound in the olive, whose oil

* Thomson, "The Land and the Book," vol. i., p. 523.

† Deut. xxxiii., 24.

he should obtain by treading with his feet.* The Hebrew word translated "honey" in the latter passage is *debesh*, which, as we have shown, corresponds to the Arabic *dibs*, meaning grape-juice sirup; so that the parallelism in this verse is complete. In stone presses are trodden the grapes and the olives, and the rock thus yields in the one case "oil," and in the other grape-juice, or "dibs."

The oil having been obtained in the manner above described, is put up in skin bottles, or stored in large, glazed earthen jars buried in the ground. Rows of such jars may be seen in several shops of the city of Pompeii impregnated with the oil they once contained. The visitor is forcibly reminded of the jars, identical in form, which stand precisely in the same manner in the shops of Eastern oil merchants.

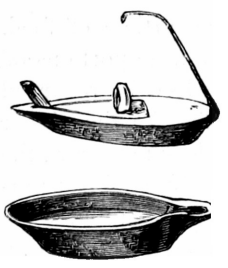
We have already spoken of the olive as an article of food. The oil derived from it is still more useful to large portions of the population of Western Asia, and may indeed be regarded as one of the indispensable necessaries of life. In the higher regions of Asia Minor, where the olive-tree does not grow, the people make butter and use sheep's-tail fat for cooking purposes, and they burn pine-knots or tallow-candles; but even there substitutes for olive-oil are extensively used. In the region of Afion Kara Hissar an oil is extracted from the seed of the poppy, which the inhabitants have learned not to dislike as an article of food. The oil obtained from the little sesame-seed is often used in cooking in every part of Western Asia, but in Mesopotamia it is also burned instead of olive-oil, and was employed for anointing in the days of Strabo.† But olive-oil is imported even there, and is considered an article of luxury for which the rich willingly pay a high price, while in olive-growing regions it is considered so necessary a comfort as to be found in the poorest dwelling. As an article of food this oil is used in the preparation of a great variety of dishes and cakes, and is a general substitute for butter, which the heat of the climate renders difficult to keep. It was evidently so in Bible times. The widow of Sarepta, who received the prophet Elijah during a great famine, had nothing

* Deut. xxxii., 13; Job xxix., 6; Ezek. xxxii., 14.

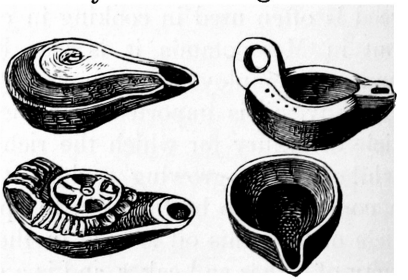
† "Geography," bk. xvi., ch. xxi., § 20.

left in her house but "a handful of meal, and a little oil in a cruse."* The enumeration of the articles of food which Solomon was to furnish for the servants of Hiram, king of Tyre, while engaged in hewing and transporting cedar-trees and fir-trees for the building of the Temple at Jerusalem, is an evidence that the chief food of the common workmen of those days, as now in similar localities, consisted of wheat flour and oil.†

But oil is also burned to give light, and is indeed the only article that is thus employed wherever it can easily be procured. Tin has now become so cheap that it is in very general use, being manufactured into lamps of various shapes, as well as lanterns with glass. The paper lanterns are lighted by a bit of candle inside. In ancient times lamps were made of earthenware, and the wealthy had them of brass, silver, and even of gold; of this last precious metal were made the candlesticks of the Temple, which were lighted with oil.‡ The poor alone still use lamps of earthenware. They are in the shape of a small plate or saucer, with the edge turned up at one side to hold the wick, and contain a spoonful of oil. Some are of tin, and have a cover. Similar ancient lamps are often found among ruins. One of the annexed bears a Christian cross. They are often elegant in form and elaborate in design. They are covered at the top, where there is a hole for pouring in the oil, while another at the side receives the wick; there is often a handle large enough to pass one finger through, for the purpose of holding it. These lamps are often adorned with graceful designs of heathen deities or mythological subjects, of animals, and birds, and comic scenes. These were ev-



Modern Clay and Tin Lamps.



Ancient Terra-cotta Lamps. (Matt. xxv., 1.)

* 1 Kings xvii., 12; 2 Kings iv., 2.
† 1 Kings v., 11; Ezra. iii., 7.
‡ Exod. xxv., 31; xxvii., 20; 2 Chron. iv., 20.

idently hand-lamps, intended to be carried about the house; but when they were required to burn for a considerable time, they needed to be replenished, and a small earthen jar filled with oil was set near the lamp, as it now is, from which a new supply was added whenever the light grew dim. It was thus that in the admirable parable of the Ten Virgins, when the lamps had burned down with the long delay of the bridegroom, "the wise" virgins were able to replenish theirs, which "the foolish" could not do.*

This, however, was not the only kind of lamp used by the ancients. The forms still extant are extremely varied, both in model and in size, many of them being made to be permanently suspended from the wall or ceiling, and others to be set on tables, shelves, brackets, or even upon the floor. The finest collection of these vessels is to be seen in the Museum of Naples. They were taken from the buried cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Brass candlesticks, and even such as are made of more costly materials, are now in use in Western Asia, and are set on brackets or upon the floor. The latter are often three or four feet high.†

The language of Job,‡ though metaphorical, expresses primarily the extreme poverty and distress to which such are reduced as are deprived of these comforts and necessaries.

The use of oil in anointing the body appears to have been general in ancient times among all the nations dwelling around the Mediterranean. Allusions to this use abound in all ancient authors. The heroes of Homer are described by him as restoring their weary limbs after a battle by frictions of oil.§ This was Alexander's practice.‖ It was Pompey's daily habit also, as well as that of all the wealthy Romans.¶ We find this custom alluded to in the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testaments. It is mentioned as forming a habitual part of the toilet on special occasions**—not to be indulged in in case of mourning.†† The head was anointed in connection with the daily recurring ablution, as mentioned in Matt. vi., 17.

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* Matt. xxv., 3, 4, 8, 9. † Rev. ii., 1. ‡ Job xxi., 17; Prov. xx., 20.
§ "Iliad" x., 577. ‖ See Plutarch, "Life of Alexander," § 30.
¶ Plutarch, "Life of Pompey," § 78.
** Ruth iii., 3; 2 Sam. xii., 20; Micah vi., 15.
†† 2 Sam. xiv., 2; Dan. x., 2, 3.

Egyptian monuments represent servants anointing guests on their arrival at their entertainer's house, and alabaster vases still exist which retain traces of the ointment they once contained.* This was adopted from the Egyptians by the Jews, and the settlement of many of these people at Alexandria served to maintain Egyptian customs among them.† This practice has disappeared in modern times, on account of the conquest of these lands by foreign nations. The hair is now anointed, but mostly by the women, since the men have the head shaved. The wrestlers, called by the Turks *Pekhliwans*, anoint themselves with oil before wrestling, as did the ancients preparatory to similar athletic exercises, in order to render their bodies more slippery under the grasp of their antagonists.‡ The custom of anointing the body is still prevalent among some nations of Africa. The Abyssinian gentleman places a lump of butter every morning on the top of his head, and covers it with his bushy locks; as it melts it flows over his body; and the Hottentots so besmear their bodies with grease as to leave traces of it wherever they sit.

Anointing with oil was a part of the ceremonial of the Jewish law, which has been introduced into the Roman as well as the Oriental churches. It is prepared by these according to the rule prescribed by Moses,§ and is with them no inconsiderable source of revenue. The "extreme unction" practiced by the Romish Church is defended by a misinterpretation of Jas. v., 14, for extreme unction is never applied until it is considered certain that the patient is about to die, whereas the words, in James, as well as in Mark vi., 13, connect anointing the sick with recovery. We do not consider that in these cases oil was used either as a means or a symbol; the anointing was simply an exercise of faith similar to Peter and John's saying to the lame man at the gate of the Temple called Beautiful, "Rise up, and walk." The elders of the church, after praying for the sick man, were to treat him as though he were recovered. They were to help him rise from his bed, wash, anoint his head and dress, and rejoice with him in view of the healing mercies of God.

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* See Wilkinson, "Ancient Egypt," i., 78, pl. 89.

† Psa. xxiii., 5; Amos vi., 6; Luke vii., 46.

‡ Josephus, "Antiquities," xv., 8, § 1; xii., 5, § 1. § Exod. xxx., 23, 24, 25.

With the Jews likewise, priests, kings, and prophets were anointed with sacred oil.* This custom is also practiced in modern times in the coronation of Christian sovereigns.

The first mention made of the olive-tree in the Scriptures represents the dove which Noah let out of the ark, returning to him in the evening, bringing an olive-leaf in its mouth.† The dove and the olive have ever since been by many nations considered emblems of peace. It is difficult to say how far this may have been produced by the traditional remembrance of the deluge, which has always been preserved among the tribes of Western Asia and South-eastern Europe; certainly the dove is the most harmless of birds, and the valuable fruits of the olive-tree greatly suffer from the prevalence of war, which always seeks to destroy this source of wealth. In the late insurrection in the island of Crete, the Turks are said to have cut down and destroyed no less than three hundred thousand olive-trees.

The incident to which we have alluded in the narrative of the deluge, *i. e.*, that "the dove plucked an olive-leaf," indicates an important circumstance with regard to that event. It shows that the deluge was not a fearful cataclysm, as some would have us believe, produced perhaps by a change of the poles of the earth, melting the glaciers of the northern regions. Such an event would have destroyed all vegetation. Noah's ship would have been wrecked by it and shattered in pieces, mountains would have been torn from their foundations, and the traces of the catastrophe would have been visible to the end of time. Not so, however, with the Mosaic narration. The waters gradually rose, and still more gradually diminished and receded until they were "dried up." The great floating house, with its living freight, was slowly lifted up and gently let down again, on one of the slopes of Ararat. The olive-trees and all the trees of the field emerged from the flood untorn by any rapid devastating current. A wicked race alone had perished by drowning, and mankind were to begin life over again. The olive is still found in the deep valleys among the mountains of Koordistan and Armenia, the probable cradle of the human race.‡

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* Lev. viii., 12; 1 Sam. xvi., 13; 1 Kings xix., 16. † Gen. viii., 11.

‡ Layard, "Nineveh," i., 138, 198; Tavernier, 26; Ussher, 408; Fletcher, 103.

CHAPTER VI.

FRUIT AND FOREST TREES, WITH THE FLOWERS OF BIBLE LANDS.

In describing the chief fruit-bearing trees of Bible lands, and particularly those which are spoken of in the Scriptures, we shall begin with such as grow nearest to the habitations of men, in the gardens and cultivated fields, whether they need artificial watering and special care, or require no particular attention.

The fig-tree is one of the most important fruit-trees of Western Asia. It grows spontaneously from the ground wherever its seed happens to fall, but its fruit is worthless until grafted. The young tree is set in some favorite spot of the garden, and often indeed planted in a cluster, or circle, making, with its wide-spread branches, a most agreeable shady arbor. The tree being very long-lived, and the main branches generally dividing close to the ground, they are often borne down by age, and with the shoots growing up from the roots form a natural bower. They are also planted in vineyards,* or orchards, in regular rows. In such a case the ground is dug around every tree in the early spring, in order to increase its fruitfulness, and sometimes the entire surface of the orchard is dug or plowed. This is not usually done to the fig-trees of a garden or vineyard, unless their fruitfulness seems impaired, when they are "dug about," and the soil is enriched, to restore their usefulness; for, as has already been stated, Orientals, as a general rule, preserve and care for fruit-bearing trees alone, every other being cut down for fuel.†

The leaves of the fig-tree surpass in size those of every other tree in Western Asia,‡ and are often made into frail baskets by sewing or pinning them together with slender twigs or thorns, for the purpose of carrying light fruit, such as the mulberry. The tree affords a thick shade, and is, on this account,

* Luke xiii., 6. † Luke xiii., 7-9. ‡ Gen. iii., 7.

a favorite resort of the family, where they may often be seen seated on mats, partaking of a meal or entertaining friends. Underneath its grateful shade many a refreshing nap is taken in the heat of the day, for it is supposed to exert a healthy influence upon the sleeper, while that of the walnut is considered deleterious. The expression "to sit under one's own vine and fig-tree" denotes at once security, domestic enjoyment, and competence.* The blossom of the fig-tree is precisely similar in appearance to a small fig, and drops off, leaving a seed-vessel, which develops into the fruit. These blossoms appear in the month of March, while the leaves are yet growing; but the earliest fruit does not ripen till July, and some even later.

There are several varieties of figs. Some are eaten fresh, which have a green color outside and are red within. Others are mostly used in a dried state. These are of a larger size, of a green or purple color without, and paler within, as well as sweeter to the taste. They are left to dry upon the tree, and when gathered and washed in sea-water, or brine, are laid up in bags and pressed into cakes as provisions for the house. Although figs are produced and dried for home consumption in all the countries bordering upon the Mediterranean, yet the dry figs of commerce are produced exclusively in a single district of Western Asia Minor. It is the valley of the Meander, in the neighborhood of Aïdin-Guzel-Hissar, the ancient Tralles. This beautiful and fertile plain abounds in extensive plantations of fig-trees, the delicacy and lusciousness of whose fruit is unsurpassed. The figs are left to dry upon the tree, and are gathered as fast as they fall or are shaken off by the wind. They are collected in bags, which are sent off to the port of Smyrna, a distance of eighty miles, on camels, and there the price of every bag is set.

The process of curing consists in washing the fruit in sea-water, after which it is sorted and packed in boxes, or "drums." While the fig is on the tree, it is, like the fruit of the sycamore, punctured near its base by an insect which deposits an egg, whence issues a grub, or worm, which usually makes its appearance after the fruit has been shipped for exportation, to

* 1 Kings iv., 25; Mic. iv., 4.

the great discomfort of all on board. It is believed that the dried fig is not fit to eat until it has thus been first tasted by this "ugly customer." The curing of the fruit with salt-water generally causes some of the saccharine matter it contains to come out upon the surface in the form of finely-powdered sugar: this has led the consignees in foreign ports to suppose that the fruit was packed with a sprinkling of sugar, and they have been known repeatedly to write to the Smyrna merchants to "use less sugar in packing the figs."

The season for preparing this fruit for the market is eagerly anticipated by the poor as the most hopeful period for obtaining the means of subsistence, great numbers of women and even children being then able to find employment in the extensive mercantile warehouses. The throngs which thus annually gather to Smyrna in "the fig season" from all the neighboring villages and islands have bestowed upon the capital of Ionia the title of "Mother of the Poor."

Dried figs are often carried on journeys, for they keep well, are wholesome, and slightly medicinal.* A dried fig is used as a very effectual poultice upon boils.† The boil of Hezekiah was doubtless of a malignant character, being either a carbuncle or a boil in the armpit, which constitutes the well-known "plague of Egypt," which was for so many centuries and until lately the scourge of the Levant. Hezekiah's cure was not effected by the "lump of figs," a remedy doubtless well known to the king's physicians; but the prophet ordered it to be treated as a common boil, with the assurance that it would prove as harmless.

There is a passage in the New Testament which has ever been a still greater stumbling-block to interpreters, one which has given birth to hypotheses almost innumerable. We refer to the account of the cursing of the fig-tree by our Lord, and to its withering soon after.‡ Most interpretations do injustice to the character of our Lord, or misrepresent the nature of the tree. Among the latter, the most extraordinary statement is that of a very respectable authority, who affirms that it was customary to plant fig-trees by the roadside because it was

* 1 Sam. xxv., 18; xxxi., 12; 1 Chron. xi., 40.

† 2 Kings xx., 7; Isa. xxxviii., 21.

‡ Matt. xxi., 18–22; Mark xi., 12–14, 20–23.

thought that the dust, by absorbing the excessive sap, increased the productiveness of the tree! Others have asserted that, as this particular tree grew by the roadside, it could not have any particular owner, so that the withering of it could injure no one. Such are not aware that in Western Asia every fruit-bearing tree, wherever it stands, has an owner, who is often not the proprietor of the soil whereon it grows, no more than the owner of a house-lot is necessarily the proprietor of the house built upon it. Other commentators maintain that this tree was wild, not knowing probably that the fruit of such can not be eaten. Others, again, state that there was an early crop, imagining that the tree yields two crops annually, and probably mistaking the fig-like blossoms of March* for the ripe fruit of a much later period, and overlooking the fact that the evangelist distinctly states that "the time of figs was not yet." Some of these views can not escape the imputation of representing our Lord as ignorant of some natural facts which were familiarly known to his disciples and the people among whom he lived. They even give us a picture of this incident which implies a movement of passion or disappointment, which led our Saviour to the performance of a miracle for the punishment of a senseless tree, totally at variance with the beneficent character of his other "wonderful works."

In presenting an interpretation of this difficult passage which may not lie open to the foregoing objections, by harmonizing at once with the character of our Lord and with all the facts in the case, we would suggest that it is but a fragmentary account, which can not be fully understood without allowing the imagination to fill up the existing chasms with the probable circumstances which have been omitted in the narrative. These might be supplied somewhat as follows: On the path which leads from Bethany, over the top of Olivet to Jerusalem, stood a fig-tree by the way-side. It was of the kind which is eaten green or fresh. Now it often happens that some of the fruit, being hidden by the leaves, is not picked, and it comes in sight when the leaves drop at the coming of winter. These figs become dry and dark, and when the fresh leaves come out in March they can easily be distinguished by their color. Al-

* Cant. ii., 13.

most every fig-tree has thus some fruit left upon its topmost branches until the ensuing season. They are indeed poor fare, even for the poorest; but our Lord belonged to the latter class. He had passed that way not long before, and had either seen them, or had plucked and eaten some of them. The owner of the tree may have been an enemy, or he may simply have been vexed by the sight of strangers who went "across lots" along the shorter path, instead of taking the high-road to Jericho, climbing on his trees and picking the old figs of last year, to the danger of injuring the young shoots and blossoms of the present crop. He cared not that Moses allowed them.* So he shook off and threw away the remaining figs. Our Lord's conduct on the occasion presents us an example of the mysterious union of the human and divine nature in one being. He looked into the tree for fruit as a man, and he understood all the circumstances of the case as God alone can. He punished the churlish owner in faithfulness to his soul, just as he had punished the Gadarenes for keeping unclean animals by letting the "legion of devils" go into the swine.† But the matter concerned not the apostles, and he told them nothing of it. For them there was only a lesson of faith. The knowledge of the punishment inflicted would have destroyed the effect of the warning they had already received upon that subject.‡

There is no evidence to prove that our Saviour intended to impress upon his hearers through this incident, as some have supposed, the dealings of God toward the Jews for bearing leaves alone without the fruits of righteousness.

No fruit-tree is more highly esteemed throughout the Levant than the pomegranate, whether for its beauty or its fruit. It is a shrub rather than a tree; and has a bright green and lustrous leaf. Its wood is fragile, and of a yellow tint. The trees are of two kinds; some producing blossoms alone, while others yield the delicious fruit. The flowers have beautiful petals of a bright scarlet color, encased in a bell-shaped calyx of a paler tint, stiff as leather, and with a regularly serrated border. The fruit is round like an orange, and terminated by the scalloped calyx. It is of a flesh color, with tints of deeper rose.§

* Deut. xxiv., 19-21.
† Matt. viii., 32.
‡ Luke ix., 54-56.
§ Cant. iv., 3.

The rind is thick, and of a bright yellow hue on the inside. The pomegranate is filled with a large number of closely-packed kernels, mostly consisting of a delicate juice, inclosing a small seed. These constitute its edible part, and are arranged in irregular groups attached to portions of the rind which project inwardly; they are separated from each other by a delicate membrane. The juice of this fruit is often manufactured into wine.* Gath-rimmon† signifies the "wine-press of the pomegranate," and implies that the wine-presses of that town were used for the manufacture of pomegranate wine. One species of pomegranate has kernels of a deep crimson color, preferred by some on account of their strong acidity, their juice being sometimes used instead of vinegar. The other variety is nearly white, of a pleasant sweet flavor, very refreshing, and a great favorite with all classes. The pomegranate keeps for a long time, and is transported over considerable distances, chiefly for the use of the sick. The rind is employed for tanning purposes, and being a powerful astringent, is administered in cases of dysentery. These trees are often seen in gardens‡ by running water, but they are also grown in extensive orchards, where they can be irrigated, as at Narlikeuy, near Smyrna.§ They are widely cultivated not only in Palestine but throughout Syria, and the sea-board of Southern and Western Asia Minor. They are also found in Persia, on the mountains of Northern India, and on all the shores of the Mediterranean. This fruit was not unknown to the ancient Egyptians, for it is carved on some of their monuments, and the Israelites were familiar with it.‖ It was extensively cultivated in Palestine during the entire Jewish history.¶ The "pomegranate-tree" under which Saul "tarried in Migron, near Gibeah," was probably a cluster or grove of these trees on the top of the high and steep hill mentioned by Josephus,** where Israel's king had gathered the remnant of his army.†† The villages or towns of Rimmon,‡‡ Gath-rimmon, and Enrimmon§§ doubtless derived their names from neighboring groves of pomegranate-trees.

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* Cant. viii., 2. † Josh. xxi., 25. ‡ Cant. vi., 11.
§ Cant. iv., 13. ‖ Exod. xxviii., 33; Numb. xx., 5.
¶ Numb. xiii., 23; Deut. viii., 8. ** "Antiquities," vi., 6, § 2.
†† 1 Sam. xiv., 2. ‡‡ Hebr. pomegranate, Josh. xv., 32.
§§ Neh. xi., 29.

The Hebrews adopted the pomegranate as a sacred emblem. It was carved on the capitals of the pillars in Solomon's Temple, and embroidered upon the priestly garments alternately with bells (its bell-shaped blossoms?)* It was doubtless a type not only of beauty, but of refreshing and of healing. The ancient heathen nations by whom the Israelites were surrounded made use of similar emblems. Among the Greeks and Romans the laurel, or oleander, was the favorite, a shrub which adorns the banks of the streams of Western Asia, and whose evergreen leaf and bright crimson blossom were easily woven into wreaths and crowns, the fit type of victory; it is now found carved upon the remains of their temples and monuments. Among the Egyptians the lotus flower, which grows amidst tranquil waters, celebrated for its delicious perfume, was the emblem of happiness and repose, and formed the capitals of the pillars which supported and adorned the buildings consecrated to religious purposes. It was in this way that the honeysuckle was very generally adopted as an architectural ornament among the Greeks: this may be simply owing to the gracefulness and fragrance of the flower; but it is singular to find it upon the most ancient sculptures of Nineveh, so represented as to indicate that it was one of the most sacred mystic emblems of that people.

The almond-tree is light and graceful, with a small and delicate leaf, and is very extensively grown, being planted in gardens and along the hedges of vineyards. It is the earliest tree to blossom, and was for that reason called by the Romans the "vigilant" or "watchful" tree, indicating its readiness to take advantage of the first mellowing of the season. Its numerous white blossoms burst forth in the month of January, before the leaf-buds appear; and being set off by the fresh grass of that season of the year, the almond-trees then present a snowy appearance, not unlike so many hoary heads scattered over the fertile valleys. Hence the simile of "the Preacher."† Almonds are of two kinds, the soft and the hard-shelled, a variety of the latter being bitter. The soft-shelled almond is produced only on some of the islands. This nut is highly esteemed, and forms a part of the provision of the household. The

* Exod. xxviii., 33, 34; 1 Kings vii., 18, 20.

† Eccles. xii., 7.

nuts mentioned in Cant. vi., 11, were probably the almond, walnut, filbert, and pistachio.* The latter is a grafted terebinth, and not very extensively cultivated, though highly esteemed; while the walnut is common and of great size; its fruit likewise is large and highly esteemed. A delicate oil is extracted from the almond, and this circumstance, together with its graceful form, doubtless led to its adoption as the model for the sacred golden candlestick† A representation of this candlestick may be seen in very good preservation, together with other spoils taken from the Jews, upon the Arch of Titus in Rome.

The camphire-tree, now called the henna, is a shrub highly esteemed throughout the East, and cultivated either singly or in rows. It is referred to only in Cant. iv., 13. Yet it is a plant of not a little importance, as illustrating some of the habits of Oriental society. A dye is made of its dried leaves, with which the women stain their hair, their finger-nails, and the palms of their hands; sometimes even the feet are dyed in the same manner, and indeed it constitutes an indispensable adornment of a bride. It is also used by the men, being applied to the hair and the beard, particularly of the aged. It is deemed highly ornamental when used to color the mane and tail of a white horse. This custom, so universal, is referred to by several authors of antiquity; and the fact that the nails of some of the Egyptian mummies (particularly those of females), still show traces of the dye upon them, is a sufficient evidence of the existence of that practice in the earliest times, and proves the durability of the dye. The blossoms of the henna are white, and grow in clusters. Their sweet perfume makes them special favorites with the women, who are fond of placing bunches of them in their bosoms.‡

We shall not describe the plantations of mulberries, nor the production of silk, now one of the principal resources of many districts of Western Asia, for this article was unknown to the ancients, except as imported from China, and its production in the Western world dates only from the twelfth century of our era.§ Silk is undoubtedly referred to only in Rev. xviii., 12.

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* See also Gen. xliii., 11.

† Exod. xxv., 33, 34; xxxvii., 19, 20.

‡ Cant. i., 13, 14.

§ Michaud, "Histoire des Croisades," iv., 299.

The only passage in the Old Testament where the word mulberry occurs in our version is considered by commentators as of doubtful correctness;* yet there is nothing in the narrative to exclude such a translation. Mulberries are of two kinds. That which yields the *black* berry is cultivated for its fruit alone, which is highly esteemed on account of its pleasant acidity; for its leaves are not given to the silk-worm. Its juice is blood-red, and it is mentioned in 1 Macc. vi., 34, that it was placed before the elephants of Antiochus, in order that the sight of what they would suppose to be blood might enrage and excite them to fight against the army of the Jews. It is this variety of mulberry which is referred to in the New Testament under the name of "sycamine,"† a purely Greek word still in common use. Though the white mulberry is sometimes eaten, it is deemed insipid. It is probable that the ancients, who were unacquainted with the manner of obtaining silk, planted the black mulberry almost exclusively for the sake of its fruit. The tree, moreover, grows to a larger size, and affords a thicker shade. It often occupies a favorite spot in a garden, or takes the place of a cluster of fig-trees in a vineyard, and is often chosen as a place of resort. The language of our Lord in the last-mentioned text would lead us to suppose that he had retired with his disciples to such a spot, when he told them that "had they faith as a grain of mustard-seed," *i. e.*, the smallest possible amount of it, they could command the mighty tree under which they were sitting, and it would rise from its place, in spite of its weight and roots, and would travel to and throw itself into the sea.

The tree which produces the white mulberry grows to a great size when not kept down by pruning for the purpose of feeding the silk-worms. It affords a dense and grateful shade in hot countries, but, as already mentioned, the fruit is insipid, though very sweet.

We shall also refrain from noticing the cultivation of cotton, one of the chief products of modern Egypt. The ancients were mostly clothed in woolen stuffs, as are, to a great extent, the inhabitants of the interior portions of the country at the present day; but the garments of the rich were made of fine

* 2 Sam. v., 23, 24; see also 1 Chron. xiv., 14, 15. † Luke xvii., 6.

linen, often beautifully embroidered and dyed.* Flax is still produced in many parts of the country, though to a limited extent, for the cheap cotton fabrics of Europe have completely supplanted the manufacture of linen. Silk also is extensively worn by the rich of both sexes.

The sycamore is a tree which flourishes best in the dry and equable climate of Upper Egypt, where it attains its greatest size. The trunk, which not unfrequently measures fifty feet in circumference, is quite short, and the principal branches are broad, and extend horizontally to a great distance, covering an extensive area with their delightful shade. The leaves are heart-shaped, downy on the under side, and somewhat fragrant: a supposed resemblance to the mulberry-leaf has given it its name, which, in the Greek language, signifies the "fig-bearing mulberry."

The sycamore is deciduous; the fresh leaves come out in the month of March, but the old do not drop until replaced by the new. The fruit is of the shape and internal structure of a small fig, of a yellowish green or purple hue when ripe. It has a sweetish and slightly aromatic taste, is watery, and inferior in flavor to the common fig. Several crops are produced yearly, and the fruit grows, not on the smaller branches, as is the case with most other trees, but upon short leafless stems directly from the trunk and principal branches.

In the hot climate of Egypt, the shade of this tree is extremely grateful to the traveler, while the fruit, though somewhat insipid, is refreshing to his parched lips, and is for this reason often planted by the road-side.† The wood of the sycamore is light and porous, but in Egypt it is long-enduring. It is supposed that of this wood were made the coffins of the mummies which have lasted for thousands of years; though others think that the wood employed was the *Cordya myxa*, also used in the manufacture of most of their furniture.

This tree flourishes throughout Palestine, but is not found in the extreme north of Syria, where the occasional frosts would surely destroy it.‡ But its fruit has never been so highly esteemed as in Egypt; see Amos vii., 14, where the prophet

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* Gen. xli., 42; Ezek. xxvii., 16; Rev. xviii., 16.

† Luke xix., 4, 5.

‡ Psa. lxxviii., 47.

calls himself "an herdman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit," indicating that he belonged to the lowest class of the people, who turned their hands to one and another of the most undesirable and unremunerative occupations, according to the season of the year and the opportunity offered. The sycamore is mostly planted in low, sandy, and sheltered situations, like the valley of the Jordan, and these trees were so numerous in the days of King David that he appointed a special overseer for them and the olive-trees.* They are easily planted, for a branch stuck into the ground and watered is sure to take root and grow into a fine tree. Thus they are planted by the roadside near a well or a spring, or where several ways meet.

When Zaccheus climbed into a sycamore-tree, he doubtless stood upon one of the lower horizontal branches extended over the road, and could see the whole multitude who accompanied our Saviour pass beneath him; a position which children, and even men and women, now take to get the best view of a similar crowd or procession.†

The language used in 1 Kings x., 27, indicates not only the abundance of the sycamore-trees, but also that there could be no comparison in the mind of the Israelite between the value of the cedar of Lebanon and the sycamore, for the cedar was the image of grandeur and glory, and its wood was not only enduring, but fragrant.‡ In the enumeration of the trees and plants described by Solomon, the cedar was placed at the head of the vegetable kingdom,§ and its wood was to be obtained only at great cost.

The date-palm is one of the most interesting trees mentioned in the Scriptures. It is indigenous, and succeeds best in the hot and dry climate of Upper Egypt, and in the peninsula of Arabia, but is also found in Palestine, around the shores of Syria and Asia Minor, and in the southern islands of the Mediterranean, particularly Cyprus, Rhodes, and Crete.‖ The Phenice here mentioned appears to have derived its name, signifying a date-palm, from the trees which grew about it; at this high latitude, however, the tree bears no fruit, or it does not come to full maturity. The dates even of Palestine are not

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* 1 Chron. xxvii., 28. † Luke xix., 4. ‡ Isa. ix., 10.
§ 1 Kings iv., 33. ‖ Acts xxvii., 12.

so highly esteemed as those of Upper Egypt. But when the Greeks and Romans had as yet little or no intercourse with the interior of Africa and Arabia, they saw this graceful tree growing upon the coast from Beirut to Jaffa, as it does to this day, and named the country Phœnicia—*the Land of the Palm;* so, when Vespasian conquered Jerusalem, he struck a coin representing a woman weeping, sitting under a palm-tree, with the inscription "Judea capta."

The palm grows in its highest perfection amidst the very sands of the desert, where, however, it depends upon fresh spring water, which is indispensable to its existence. It is thus a fit emblem of the righteous living and prospering in a wicked world, sustained by enduring influences derived originally from the skies.* It is found in Upper and Central Egypt in extensive plantations, and is the principal tree of that region, the inhabitants greatly depending upon it for their subsistence.

This remarkable tree consists of a single stem or trunk, attaining the height of sixty or eighty feet without a branch, and crowned at the summit by a cluster or tuft of leaves, or "palms" that droop and shape themselves somewhat in the form of an umbrella. Each of these palms spreads out like a fan from a stem which is attached to the trunk; and these stems form a circle which marks the annual growth of the tree. In a wild state, the successive rows of palms wither and contract, but remain upon the trunk, producing with every breath of wind a strange creaking sound in the silence of the desert; in such a case the quantity and quality of the fruit are inferior. The natives, therefore, cut off these stems as fast as they dry, leaving but five or six circles of palms upon the top of the tree, which constitute its foliage. The trunk thus presents the appearance of scales, which enable a man to climb with ease to the top of the tree and gather the fruit.†

The dried palms, when cut off, are manufactured into baskets and mats, while the fibres of their stems are made into brooms. The date-palm is divided into staminate and pistillate;‡ and there is, again, another distinction made, according as the fruit, when ripe, is dark red, yellow, or white. It grows

* Psa. xcii., 12. † Cant. vii., 8. ‡ Herodotus, bk. i., ch. 193.

in large clusters, or bunches, which hang from the trunk, near the root of the lowest green stems, presenting the appearance, with the fresh foliage above, of a graceful basket, through whose irregular openings the fruit hangs down, its amber tint in beautiful contrast with the dark, shining leaves above. The pistils of the date-blossom contain a fine and curly fibre, which is beaten out and used in all the Eastern baths for soaping the body. At the extremity of the trunk, and above the uppermost circle of palms, is a terminal bud, containing a whitish substance, resembling a fresh almond both in consistency and in taste, which the Arabs eat with the greatest relish whenever a date-tree is cut down, calling it "the heart of the tree."*

The wood of the palm, though light and porous, is much used in architecture. As the tree puts forth a new set, or circlet, of palms every year, it affords a reliable source of information as to its own age; thus trees have repeatedly been ascertained to be of several centuries' growth. The date, whose name is derived from the Greek word δάκτυλος, signifying *a finger*, from its resemblance to a finger-end, is about an inch in length, and contains a hard elongated seed or kernel. It is both sweet and nourishing, and a fine fruit when eaten fresh. In Upper Egypt it ripens in June, but later in cooler climates. Its juice is frequently made into a kind of sirup, and sometimes into vinegar. Spirits are also distilled from it. But the fruit is mostly used in a dried state. The dates exported to foreign countries are of an inferior quality, being often gathered before they are ripe. The best are put up in the following manner: a light palm-leaf basket is packed full of the perfectly ripe fruit, detached from the stems, some juice or sirup being poured in to fill up the interstices. The edges of the basket are then sewed together, and it is stowed away. The very kernels of this fruit are useful to man, for they are ground up and given as food to the camels.

Frequent mention is made of the palm-tree in the Scriptures. We have already stated that Phœnicia and Phœnice, in Crete, derived their names from this tree. Other places also owe their appellation to the same source; an evidence that though

* Strabo mentions an Oriental poem which celebrates three hundred and sixty uses of the palm ("Geography," bk. xv., p. 742). The number three hundred and sixty is also Oriental.

palm-trees were more abundant in Palestine in ancient times than at the present day, yet they were not so common as some have inferred. Elim, one of the resting-places of the Israelites on their way from Egypt to Sinai, derived its name from the three-score and ten palm-trees which grew there amidst twelve fountains of spring water.* The place is now called Wady Gurundel, and is still marked by palm-trees and fountains.† Elath, probably now Akaba, in Edom, seems also to have derived its name from palm-trees growing there in ancient times. They do not now appear to exist; we only know that palm-trees were common in Idumea.‡ Tadmor in the Wilderness, still called by the same name in Arabic, signifies *the City of Palms*, a word which was literally translated by the Romans, who called it Palmyra. It was built by King Solomon,§ and at an hour's ride to the south lies the plain, or "valley of salt," in which David smote the Syrians, or Edomites,‖ though some suppose the site of this battle is in a similar valley which lies to the south-east of Aleppo. Mr. Halifax, when he visited Tadmor, in 1691, found a few palm-trees still remaining in the gardens, and in a few spots around the city.¶

Jericho is repeatedly called "the city of palms" in the Bible. There were groves of them seven miles long at one time, and the tree was abundant at the time of the conquest by Joshua.** And Josephus, who was a contemporary of our Saviour and the apostles, repeatedly refers to this tree as abounding around Jericho and along the banks of the Jordan.†† We, moreover, find it alluded to as existing there from that time till a very recent period; but a few years ago a solitary palm was left, which has since disappeared. Old trunks are occasionally washed up on the shores of the Dead Sea. Engedi, identified with Hazezon-tamar, signifying the "felling of the palm-tree," is mentioned under the latter name in Gen. xiv., 7; and 2 Chron. xx., 2. It stood on the western shore of the Dead Sea, and was once a city second in importance only to Jerusalem, and celebrated for the fertility of its soil and for its palm-

* Numb. xxxiii., 9. † Robinson, "Biblical Researches," i., 69.
‡ Virgil, "Georgics," iii., 12; Martial, x., 50. § 2 Chron. viii., 4.
‖ 2 Sam. viii., 13; 1 Chron. xviii., 12. ¶ Van Bruyn, chap. lxviii., p. 343.
** Deut. xxxiv., 3; Judg. i., 16; iii., 13; 2 Chron. xxviii., 15.
†† "Jewish War," iv., 8, § 2, 3; "Antiquities," xv., 4, § 2.

trees.* Baal-tamar, mentioned in Judges xx., 33, also derived its name from the palm-tree. It is called by Eusebius Beit-tamar—"the house of the palm-tree"—and is supposed to be identical with the spot "between Ramah and Bethel, in Mount Ephraim," where Deborah the prophetess "dwelt under the palm-tree, and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment."† Bethany—"the house of dates"—indicates that the palm-tree grew on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, which is further confirmed by the fact that, just before his crucifixion, our Lord went over that mountain riding upon an ass, while the people met him with "branches of palm-trees" which they strewed in his path.‡ The tree doubtless abounded in the vicinity of Jerusalem, as did the olive, for it is mentioned that, when the Feast of Tabernacles was first kept by the Jews after the captivity, the proclamation was given out that the people "go forth unto the mount and fetch olive-branches, and pine-branches, and myrtle-branches, and palm-branches, and branches of thick trees to make booths.§ This graceful tree is, however, no longer to be seen in the neighborhood of Jerusalem.

The palm-tree was anciently used as a model in architectural art. The earliest example of it may be seen among the temples of Egypt. Solomon adorned "the walls of the Temple round about with carved figures of cherubims and palm-trees, and open flowers within and without."‖ The principal central building, "the greater house," was adorned with golden bass-reliefs representing "palm-trees and chains."¶ In Ezekiel's vision of the Temple, also, the pillars which supported the porch were carved in the form of palm-trees; the walls and the doors were alike adorned with carvings of this tree.** But it is not in Palestine alone that the palm-tree seems to have been a favorite model for architectural decoration; Herodotus speaks of the hall of the Temple of Sais, in Egypt, which was adorned in a similar manner.†† This tree also frequently occurs upon the carved walls of the ancient palaces of Nineveh.‡‡

In the East, at the present day, the same decoration is fre-

* Pliny, "Natural History," v., 17.
† Judg. iv., 4, 5.
‡ John xii., 13.
§ Neh. viii., 15.
‖ 1 Kings vi., 29; vii., 36.
¶ 2 Chron. iii., 5.
** Ezek. xl., 16; xli., 18–20.
†† Herodotus, bk. ii., ch. 169.
‡‡ Layard, "Nineveh," ii., 110, 301, 304.

quently met with. The Muslims avoid, even more than the Hebrews, the representations of living creatures; but the walls of their houses are often painted within with elaborate images of trees, flowers, fruit, and landscapes, among which the palm is conspicuous. At the Dolma-Bakcheh palace of the Sultan, on the Bosphorus, every window of the building containing the women's apartments has a picture of a palm-tree painted externally upon the lattice which covers its entire surface.

So likewise the beauty and gracefulness of the palm led the ancients to use it as an appropriate comparison for a fair woman. Homer thus describes Naasicaa, the daughter of Alcinous.* So Solomon, in Cant. vii., 7: "Thy stature is like to a palm-tree." Hence the name *Tamar*, "date-palm," was given to women. In the Old Testament we have three instances of this, viz., the daughter-in-law of Judah,† the sister of Absalom,‡ and Absalom's daughter.§ The beauty of the last two is particularly mentioned. In modern times, for ten centuries past, the cypress has been cultivated with so much success, and has become such a favorite in Turkey, especially to adorn the graves of the dead, that it vies with the palm in Oriental poetry, as an emblem of womanly grace and beauty. The tombs of women are ornamented with carved representations, often highly colored and gilded, of one or the other of these trees; and now, as in ancient times, a daughter is not unfrequently named *Tamra* among the Arabs, and *Armaveni* among the Armenians, two words bearing the same signification.

The fruit of the carob-tree,‖ called husks in the English version of the New Testament, is spoken of but once in the Scriptures. It occurs in the parable of the Prodigal Son, where he is described as having reached such a depth of degradation as not only to associate daily with "unclean" swine, but to be ready to share gladly with them their meagre food.¶

This tree is of the size of a large apple-tree, with a denser foliage and a longer leaf of dark, glossy green. It is an evergreen, and grows both wild and cultivated, affording refreshing shade. The carob is common in Palestine, especially in those uncultivated tracts which are in Scripture denominated

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* "Odyssey," vi., 163.
† Gen. xxxviii., 6.
‡ 2 Sam. xiii., 1.
§ 2 Sam. xiv., 27.
‖ Arabic, kharoob.
¶ Luke xv., 16.

"desert," or "the wilderness." It is also found in Egypt, in Syria, in the southernmost isles of the Archipelago, and particularly in Cyprus. Its fruit consists of a pod from six to ten inches long by one in breadth, which contains, besides several hard seeds, a sweet, thick pulp, not unpleasant to the taste when fully ripe. These pods, when ground up, yield a kind of sirup much used in the preparation of certain sweetmeats. They are, when dry, of a shining dark brown, and by contracting assume the shape of a horn, which led the Greeks to call them κεράτια, derived from κέρας, *a horn*, the word used in Luke xv., 16; and it is worthy of note that the Turks and Armenians also call them by a name which in their languages respectively has the same signification. The fruit closely resembles the pods of the honey-locust-tree, a species of acacia; and it is probably to this circumstance, and the fact that this tree grows in the wilderness, that we are to attribute the mistake of some commentators who believe it constituted the "locusts" which John the Baptist "did eat."* The monks of Palestine call the carob "St. John's bread." Ἀκρίδες, however, the word used in the original, belongs not to the vegetable but to the animal kingdom.

In spite of the Mosaic prohibition, the Hebrews occasionally violated the law which forbade the use of swine's flesh.† Under Mohammedan rule, this animal is never kept by Muslims, nor do Christians dare to do it. In Cyprus, however, where the Muslim population is small, the swine may be seen feeding in the orchards of carob-trees upon the pods which lie on the ground, for they fall as soon as dry; and in regions where the dwarf-oak does not offer them its acorns, the wild boars mostly feed upon the fruit of the carob. The dry pods, however, are not despised by men as an article of food. There is scarcely a large town in the whole extent of Turkey where they may not be seen in the market, sold with walnuts, raisins, and other dried fruits, and though not favorites, they are often purchased by the poor, chiefly for their cheapness, which is proverbial.

The prickly pear, or cactus, is not particularly mentioned in Scripture, yet its large leaves, thickening into branches below, form so peculiar a feature in the landscape that all notice of it

* Mark i., 6.

† Mark v., 13, 14.

can not be omitted. Its thorny fruit grows around the rim of the outer leaves, and is rather insipid. This plant is found only upon the alluvium near the sea. The banana-tree, with its large peculiar leaves, is mostly confined to Egypt.

We need not speak of the groves of orange, lemon, and citron trees, for which the coast and many of the islands are justly celebrated. The Jaffa oranges vie with the large seedless fruit of Crete, and the more juicy produce of Rhodes and Scio. Damask prunes derive their name from Damascus, and apricots are eaten fresh and preserved in various forms in many parts of the East. Quinces do best in Asia Minor, but the fruits obtained from the Persian grafts exceed every other variety in size, and are so sweet as to be eaten raw. Cherries are at home in all the Anatolian peninsula; they derive their name from Kerason, a town on the southern shore of the Black Sea. Strawberries grow wild on the slopes of Taurus and Anti-taurus, and are cultivated, as well as currants, at Constantinople. The finest pears come from Angora, though the fruit is indigenous in all parts of the country; and no apple in the world can surpass, hardly indeed equal, the muscatel apple of Amasia, in Pontus.

We have already mentioned the fact that the Hebrews considered the cedar-tree as occupying the first place in the vegetable kingdom. This was not owing to its superior usefulness to man, but to certain circumstances which caused it to be venerated by the nation.* It was from this tree that the timber was obtained which formed the chief material of the Temple built by Solomon to the living God;† and it was used in the erection of the palaces of their kings,‡ as well as the dwellings of the most wealthy and powerful of the Jews.§ At the restoration, likewise, after the captivity of Babylon, the second temple was built by Zerubbabel of cedar from Lebanon,‖ and the same material was employed in the repairs made at a later period. For this purpose there was no tree so well fitted, on account of the straightness and extreme length of its trunk or central stem (which sometimes attained the height of a hundred and twenty feet), its durability, and the fragrance of its wood.

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* 2 Sam. vii., 2. † 2 Chron. ii., 3, 4. ‡ 1 Chron. xvii., 1.
§ Jer. xxii., 14, 15. ‖ Ezra iii., 7.

The cedar of Lebanon was peculiar to that "goodly mountain." It probably once covered all the higher portions of the western slope of Lebanon, for the Phœnicians alone possessed it.* It formed a belt which reached to the snow-capped rocks that constitute its crest, mingled here and there with the fir, and giving place farther down to the massive pitch-pine, whose peculiar form has led to its being called the "parasol-pine."



Cedars of Lebanon.

Both the fir and the pine are found all over Western Asia; but the place of the cedar is usually occupied by the wild cypress. This is not the tall steeple-like tree, the sharp outline of whose dark foliage now characterizes so much of Oriental scenery, owing to the custom introduced by the Muslims of planting it in thick groves among the tombs of their dead. It existed anciently, though not in equal abundance.† The wild cypress grows on the tops of the highest mountains. It needs but little soil whence to derive moisture, and often is seen standing on the brow of a barren rock, firmly held in this strange position by the long roots it sends into the fissures and crevices near its base. It thus bears the brunt of the storm, and stretches out its half-denuded arms in the face of the tem-

* 1 Kings v., 6.

† Strabo, "Geography," bk. xiv., chap. i., § 21.

pest. This tree yielded gopher-wood, of which the ark was built.* It is the most enduring of all wood, and was the best material for a structure which was one hundred and twenty years in process of erection.†

The Phœnicians employed gopher-wood in the construction of their shipping, on account of its lightness and durability. It is now cut and its timber made into chests, in which valuable furs and woolen garments are kept for its fragrance, which is still greater than that of the cedar, and effectually preserves them from moths.



Oriental Woodman's Axe. (2 Kings vi., 5–7.)

It has been thought by some that the "algum-trees" brought by the ships of Solomon and Hiram, "with gold and precious stones from Ophir," of which were made "harps and psalteries for singers,"‡ were cypress. This hypothesis is based upon the fact that "in Italy, violins, harpischords, and other stringed instruments are made of cypress-wood." This is evidently an error, for the cypress grows wild to this day on the heights of Lebanon; and it was used by the Tyrians, as we have already stated, in the construction of their ships. If Ophir was in India, the algum might be cinnamon-wood.

There appears to be little doubt that the name "cedar" was applied by the ancients, not to one particular species of conifera alone, but to a variety of forest-trees which presented the same general appearance. Some of the timber found in the ancient palaces of Nineveh has been proved, by microscopic examination, to be yew; yet the inscriptions describe it as cedar, which the Assyrian kings imported from Lebanon.§

The specimens, however, which still remain of this remarkable tree fully justify the admiration of the Hebrews; nor were they the only people who held it in high esteem. The cedar, but slightly different from that of Lebanon, is found on

* Gen. vi., 14. † Gen. vi., 3. ‡ 2 Chron. ix., 10, 11.
§ Layard, "Nineveh and Babylon," pp. 356, '57.

Mount Taurus, and extends eastward to the Himalayas. It also grows upon the mountains of Numidia, as well as on the islands of Cyprus and Crete. The testimony of the ancients is unequivocal respecting the durability of its wood. The cedar timbers of the Temple of Diana had lasted four hundred years when it was burned by the hand of an incendiary; and the beams of Numidian cedar in the Temple of Apollo, at Utica, had lasted one thousand one hundred and seventy-eight years;* while Solomon's Temple, when burned by Nebuchadnezzar, had been standing above four hundred years.†

Most of the cedars which once adorned Mount Lebanon have disappeared. The tree is now confined to two or three localities lying above Tripoli, on the Syrian coast, and near the Maronite convent of Canobin, in a semicircular hollow or valley open only toward the west. This spot is about six thousand four hundred feet above the sea, and three hundred feet below the highest peak of Lebanon. The cedars here stand in a cluster or grove which occupies the hollow, and are about four hundred in number: a dozen of these trees are very large and old, generally consisting of several trunks starting from the same root, with the branches spreading out to a considerable distance, and the entire stem nearly straight to the summit of the tree. Three hundred of the trees in this interesting grove are young and small, and the remainder are of intermediate sizes. The beautiful smooth cones, about three inches in length, usually growing in pairs as they ripen, drop their seeds upon the ground, which sprout up in every direction from the bed of dried leaves that enriches the soil underneath. It would be easy to multiply these trees by transplanting them beyond their present limit, but improvement and thrift are not the order of the day in Turkey. This grove is preserved from destruction by the superstitious veneration of the neighboring inhabitants, a sentiment not unfrequently entertained toward natural objects of a similar character in many parts of the country.

Most of the population of this region are Maronites, who have a small chapel attached to this grove; and the mountaineers of the adjacent villages gather here once a year, on the

* Pliny, "Natural History," xii., 40; xiii., 5. † 2 Kings xxv., 9.

Feast of the Transfiguration, to witness the celebration of mass and engage in festivities.

This grove of cedars on the heights of Lebanon may be regarded as a link between the days of Solomon, when the Hebrew commonwealth reached its highest prosperity, and our modern times.

The oak and the terebinth seem often to have been confounded together by the translators of the Bible. Both trees, doubtless, abounded in ancient Palestine. They still flourish there, as well as in Syria and Asia Minor. They resemble each other much in their general appearance, are alike long-lived; and being well adapted to afford a refreshing shade, single trees are often planted on the outskirts, and sometimes in the centre of a village, and are favorite places of resort for both sexes and all ages. It does not, however, require much attention to discover the difference between these two trees. The general form of the trunk of the terebinth is more regular than that of the oak, although of the two the bark of the former is more rough. The outspreading branches of the terebinth begin higher up than those of the oak, and its leaves are a regular oval, of a somewhat deeper green, but not so glossy. The greatest difference, however, consists in the fruit of the two trees; for, in place of the acorn produced by the oak, the terebinth bears a fruit of the size of a small pea, and, in the case of one variety, four times as large. It consists of a white shell, holding an oily pulp, and contained in a bluish-green pellicle. The fruit grows in clusters from short stems, and in some places, where the tree is abundant, oil is extracted from the berries by crushing them like olives.* The terebinths we have described are wild or ungrafted. There is a smaller species of this tree called the pistachio, varying from fifteen to thirty feet in height, which produces a nut three-quarters of an inch in length, and very delicate and agreeable to the taste. The term "terebinth" is the generic name both of the pistachio-tree and of the common terebinth, and the latter is often grafted with the former. The pistachio-tree is now rarely found, except near Beirut and in the neighborhood of Aleppo. It is, indeed, mostly confined to the latter locality, where it is pro-

* Thomson, "The Land and the Book," vol. i., p. 413.

duced in abundance. In accordance with a very ancient Oriental custom, the Aleppines are in the habit of sending this delicious fruit to friends in neighboring countries whose favor they desire to secure. Among the "best fruits" of the land sent by Jacob to the ruler of Egypt were enumerated "nuts."* The word *botnim*, translated "nuts" in our Bible, is rendered "terebinth" in the Greek and Latin versions, and can only indicate the nuts obtained from the pistachio-tree, which the Persian version calls *pusteh*, a word corresponding to the modern Arabic *fustuk*—pistachio.

Betonim, a town of the tribe of Gad, whose name signifies "terebinth-trees," seems to have derived its appellation from its pistachio-trees, whose nuts it probably exported. This mode of naming towns is still in practice at the present day.† Narli Keuy, the "village of pomegranates," near Smyrna, derives its name from the extensive groves of that tree flourishing in its vicinity; and so *Elmalù*—the "village of apples," etc. Dioscorides and Pliny, at the beginning of the Christian era, speak of pistachio-nuts as one of the peculiar products of Syria and Palestine, which had been introduced thence into Italy and Spain.‡

The oak is one of the most common trees of Western Asia: it forms such an important feature in some of its landscapes, and is referred to so frequently in the Bible, that we can not pass it wholly unnoticed. There are several species of oak. The stunted or dwarf oak covers many a tract of hilly country. It grows to the height of some eight to twenty feet, never attaining any degree of thickness. These dwarf oaks produce the gall-nut, which assumes great varieties of size, color, and form. Among these is the article exported as a drug. The only use made of the tree is to cut it down for fire-wood and the manufacture of charcoal; cattle, and especially camels, feed upon its leaves. When dry in the autumn, they are often set on fire by the nomadic tribes, for the purpose of obtaining a better crop of grass for their flocks.

Besides the gall-nut, however, which is a product of the Oriental dwarf oak, there are brownish-red (sometimes yellow)

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* Gen. xliii., 11. † Josh. xiii., 26.

‡ Dioscorides, i., 1771; Pliny, xiii., 5; xv., 22.

tubercles or balls, of the size of apples, which grow upon the branches. They are covered with a glue, which gives them, in the autumn, the appearance of an attractive fruit; but they are spongy within, and full of brown dust. Ignorant travelers have called them "apples of Sodom," not being aware, apparently, that they are not confined to the neighborhood of the Dead Sea, but are found equally in all the hilly districts of Western Asia.* The accompanying illustration is half the natural size in diameter.



The Apple of Sodom.



Valonea Acorn.

Another species of oak is called *Valonea*, a word doubtless derived from the Hebrew *Allon*. It produces a small acorn, whose "cup" is of very great size, and is extensively exported as an article of commerce, being used throughout Europe for tanning purposes. No less than 150,000 hundred-weight is imported annually into Great Britain alone from Western Asia and South-eastern Europe.

* Strabo, bk. xvi., chap. ii., § 45; Curzon, 181.

This species of oak is highly graceful, and of beautiful proportions. Its leaf is regular, and of a light green. It covers extensive tracts in Asia Minor, where it grows chiefly on the red sandstone formation. It is also found in dense forests in Gilead and Bashan, in Palestine.

The more common oak, however, of the land of Israel is the same which is found all over Europe. Its leaf is small, dark, and shining, and it attains a great size. We have seen oaks that measured more than twenty feet in circumference, and whose shadow covered an area of at least one hundred feet in diameter. These fine old trees are generally found planted on a smooth terrace, in the square of a village, or in some spot of easy access.* Such a tree, or several of them together (for the word is variously rendered), were planted by Abraham at the well of Beersheba—an event deemed of sufficient importance to be mentioned in the sacred text.† But in many cases there can be no doubt that, instead of the tree (or "grove") being planted for the accommodation of the village, the village itself was built around the tree in order to secure its shade. We have ourselves seen such a process taking place.

An Oriental rarely plants any but fruit-bearing trees, and the scarcity of fuel offers a strong temptation to cut down simple shade-trees wherever they grow. But when he finds an aged denizen of the fields whose extending branches spare him the trouble of spreading his tent, no one is quicker than he to avail himself of this advantage. He smooths the ground under it, builds up a platform, and sometimes surrounds the area with a wall. There is often a younger tree near by, carefully preserved from injury, which is intended to take the place of the aged veteran whenever inexorable time shall prostrate him. There are many such trees in Palestine, and especially oaks. The fine old oak of Brummana, which crowns the crest of one of the lower heights of Lebanon, is easily distinguished from the harbor of Beirut below. The large cavity in its hollow trunk would shelter several persons at once. Robinson, in his "Researches,"‡ gives the measurements of the splendid oak near Hebron, which popular tradition has connected with the name

* Judg. vi., 11, 19. † Gen. xxi., 33. ‡ Vol. ii., p. 81.

of Abraham. It is, however, difficult to reconcile this with other traditions equally authentic respecting a neighboring spot.* At any rate, there is not the remotest probability that an oak can live thirty-five centuries; so that the only possible connection between Abraham's "*oaks* of Mamre"† and the modern tree at Hebron is that of descent. The dimensions of this tree are certainly remarkable. This venerable oak, which grows by the side of a well, and is a place of resort for the people, measures as follows: twenty and a half feet around the thickest part of the trunk, and eighty-nine feet as the diameter of the shadow of its foliage under a vertical sun.

The oak is also planted by the graves of the dead, unless the oak groves which are used as burial-grounds may have existed already, and were appropriated for this purpose. Such trees are always respected, and are never touched by the woodman's axe. It must not be understood, however, that any sacred character attaches to the oak, or any other tree planted by the graves of the dead. We, moreover, find different trees, such as terebinths and pines, besides the cypress and the oak, planted in groves to adorn the cemeteries of towns and villages, and the more isolated burying-grounds of the wandering tribes.‡

The oak still exists as a forest-tree in Palestine. This tree flourishes luxuriantly not only upon Lebanon, but also in Gilead, and particularly on the hills of Bashan: it is, however, being destroyed by the wandering Bedawin for the purpose of making charcoal. They light a fire by the side of a trunk; a portion of which being thus consumed, the tree is prostrated by the winter blasts. The Arabs then cut away and use only the smaller branches, leaving the principal part of the tree to decay and perish as it lies.§ From this and similar causes many of the noble forests spoken of in the Hebrew Scriptures have long ago disappeared from the land.‖

There is another tree which, like the oak and the terebinth, attracts the attention of the traveler in Western Asia by its size, its grateful shadow, and its being a place of resort for the people; it is the platanus, or plane-tree (also called button-

* Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," 142.
† Gen. xviii., 1, 4.
‡ Gen. xxxv., 8; 1 Sam. xxxi., 13.
§ Porter, "Giant Cities of Bashan," p. 53.
‖ 1 Sam. xiv., 25; 2 Kings ii., 24.

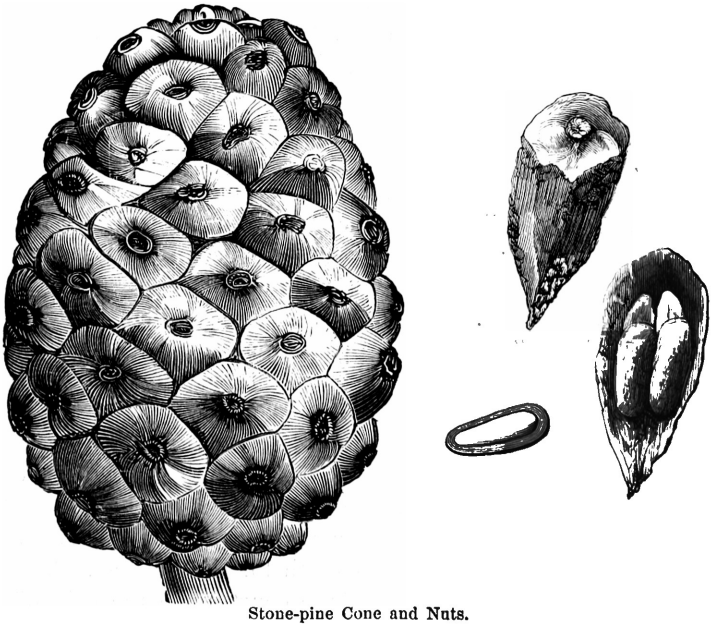
wood), which, though not often mentioned in Scripture, should not be omitted in this sketch. This tree* is never found except in the vicinity of water. It often shades a well, a spring, or a fountain, and prospers even beside a torrent, whose stony bed lies dry during the summer. The platanus often attains a great size, and specimens of great age are not unfrequently met with. In such cases the interior portions of the trunk are apt to decay and leave a cavity, which forms a chamber of considerable size. We have known one which measured nearly ten feet in diameter.†

Several species of pine are indigenous in Western Asia, and are used both as fuel and for building purposes. The most useful of all is the stone or pitch pine, the first name indicating the stony soil (sometimes sandy) on which it grows, and the second the resinous matter it contains, and which constitutes its chief value. Even as fuel it is so highly prized that it is sowed and raised sometimes in the neighborhood of a city, which offers a good market for the fuel thus obtained, chiefly for the supply of the public baths. It is, moreover, from this species alone that are obtained the nuts contained in its cone, which are so highly esteemed in the East, and enter into the preparation of so many dishes. The tree is long-lived; its trunk is straight and bare of branches up to a considerable height, where they run out horizontally, giving the tree the name of "parasol pine," by which it is called in Southern Europe. The resin, for which it is chiefly valued by the country people, is obtained in the following manner: a piece of the trunk is cut out near the root, sufficiently large for the resin to exude, and after a twelvemonth chips saturated with pitch are obtained from the spot. These chips are cut into small sticks about six inches long, tied in bundles, and sent to market. The trees will stand this treatment for a number of years; they finally become top-heavy, and are thrown down by the wind. The branches are then cut away and burned as fuel, and the trunks are shaped into beams and rafters for the houses. The

* In Hosea iv., 13, the Hebrew word *elah*, rendered in our English version *elms*, is translated *platanus* by the Septuagint, which is doubtless a more correct rendering, elms being unknown in Palestine; but the true meaning of *elah* is *oak* and *terebinth;* and it is so rendered in many places in our version.

† Ainsworth, i., 49.

pitch with which they are saturated prevents decay; and we have ourselves struck with an axe a beam of this wood which had been cut one hundred and fifty years before, without being able to make an impression upon it, so compact had become its pitchy texture. In passing through a forest of stone-pines not far from a village, it is not uncommon to find all the largest and finest trees treated in this manner. There is abundant evidence that the ancients practiced this process for the identical purpose; and it is an interesting fact that the Greeks now call the chips of pitch-pine we have described, δαδί, which is the same as the δαΐς of the ancients.*



Stone-pine Cone and Nuts.

It is not strange that few allusions should be made in the Scriptures to the flowers and ornamental shrubs of Palestine. They treat of historical and ethical subjects, and allusions of this nature must necessarily be casual. This topic, however, illustrates too well some traits in the character of Oriental people to be passed by without notice.

* See Theophrastus, "Hist. Plant.," lib. i., cap. vi., § 1; lib. iii., cap. ix., § 3; lib. x., cap. ii., §§ 2, 3, etc.

We may begin with the general remark that we have never met with any desire or taste for the study of botany as a science, or any thing like an attempt to cultivate a large variety of garden plants and flowers. When they are not produced for the market, even the wealthiest classes are satisfied with a few favorite species, preferring the brightest colors and those which exhale the most agreeable perfumes, and endeavoring not to be left without some kind of flower or fragrant plant during any portion of the year. The rose and the carnation are decidedly the favorites of all classes, and are worn on the head, fastened under the edge of the turban over the forehead, not by the children and youths alone, but equally by the aged. Many other fragrant flowers are in great favor, such as the narcissus, the jasmine, the tuberose, the hyacinth, the lilac, and the violet; they are carried in the hand or worn in the bosom. There is also a large class of fragrant aromatic plants, sprigs of which are carried in the same way. The cassi, in Arabic *misk*,* is a small species of acacia, bearing a little golden blossom resembling a downy ball, half an inch in diameter, and of a delicious perfume. It is carried about the person, and scattered among linen or other clothing kept in chests.

There is no such thing, however, as a regularly laid-out flower-garden. The vegetable patches are marked out with a line, but the flowers must take care of themselves. The rose-bushes grow along the garden-walls, and other flowers and shrubs are at liberty to come up wherever they do not interfere with the production of useful plants. They have a domain of their own, however, the flower-pot, whether of burned clay, or of plain boards roughly nailed together, or even a fragment of a water-jar, filled with earth for the purpose. These are arranged along the walls of the court, upon the balconies, under the trellis, upon the edge of the terraced roof, or even firmly set in mortar along the edge of a parapet. There flourish in the greatest luxuriance every variety of the carnation; there flaunts the double marigold, pride of the Turkish inhabitants everywhere; and there is the lovely green of the fragrant never-failing "sweet basil," the *habisk* of the Arabs, called by the Greeks *vasilico*, which gives its name to many a blushing maiden.

* Is it the *shittah* of the Hebrews? Isa. xli., 19.

The wild rose grows in abundance all over Western Asia; its bright petals glow in every hedge and adorn every thicket. The cultivated species are abundant, and extremely varied. It is the land of roses, and the first of May is observed by the Christian population of Western Asia (a relic of heathenism) with feasting and rejoicing in the gardens and the groves, and collecting flowers, mostly roses, which are wreathed in garlands and hung over the doors of their dwellings. These they superstitiously avoid disturbing until renewed the following year.

The rose, however, does not commend itself by its fragrance and brightness alone to the utilitarian Oriental. Rose-water is distilled all over the country, and is largely employed to flavor various articles of food, chiefly pastry and sweetmeats, also as a remedy for diseases of the eye, and otherwise on various occasions described elsewhere. The light pink and the white are used for these purposes; other varieties are less cultivated. The ottar, or otto—the oil of roses—is obtained from a peculiar variety of this flower, which is exclusively produced in the northern part of Roumelia, between Adrianople and the Balkan mountains.

It appears to have been decided by commentators that the rose of Sharon mentioned in Cant. ii., 1, and Isa. xxxv., 1, of our version, is no rose at all, but the flower of a bulbous root. The varieties of these plants are not numerous, and if we except the tulips and their cognates, of which we shall speak by-and-by, they all offer but little attraction to an Eastern mind, on account of the paleness of their tints. The only exceptions, perhaps, are the hyacinth and the narcissus, both of which are favorites, combining as they do beauty and perfume. Some versions have employed the word "narcissus" for "rose" in Canticles, and we believe this to be a correct translation.

There has been much difference of opinion respecting the flower designated by our Saviour, in the Sermon on the Mount, under the name of "lilies of the field:" it appears to be the same as referred to in Cant. ii., 1, being there called "the lily of the valley." We shall not stop to discuss the numerous candidates for the honor whose claims have already been advanced, but shall content ourselves with presenting those of the one we now suggest.

The red tulip is called by the Persians and Armenians

shushan, by the Turks *laleh* (as *Lalely Djami*, the Mosk of Tulips, at Constantinople,) and by the Greeks κρίνον. It is evident, however, that the lily spoken of in Canticles and Matthew is a wild flower, extremely common. Now there is a wild flower extremely common in all Western Asia, which presents the appearance of a small tulip, while it is superior to it in beauty, and easily mistaken for it. In French it is appropriately designated *Anémone des près*, or Meadow Anemone, and might deservedly be termed "the queen of the meadows." This delicate and graceful flower is remarkable for the great variety of colors it assumes: it is often seen of a bright scarlet, and of every shade of purple and pink, as well as straw-color and white. With these we include, under the denomination of "the lilies of the field," both the wild tulip and the wild poppy, for an unscientific eye can not distinguish the one from the other.* The Arab, when asked the name of these "lilies" and the other wild flowers blooming in the vale, makes no answer but *hashish*—they are "grass," vividly illustrating Matt. vi., 30. It should be borne in mind that our Saviour drew his similitudes from objects near by, or in sight of his hearers. The Sermon on the Mount, in which this passage occurs, was delivered near the foot of the mount—just such a spot as these flowers are wont to adorn. As he looked upon the plain below, the wild flowers to which he could draw a comparison were the buttercups, dandelions, daisies, and these anemones, tulips, and poppies; and he naturally selected the latter class, which is distinguished from all the rest by the brightness of their hues; and some of which, we may easily imagine, as is often done at this very day, had been gathered and arranged by some of the children and presented to the rabbi. We have already mentioned that these flowers grow upon the lower



The Lily of the Field—Meadow Anemone. (Matt. vi., 28.)

* See Lynch, p. 225; Thevenot, 181; Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," p. 100, 137; Van de Velde, i., 205.

slopes of the hills; they often peer from under the edges of the thorny bushes;* and such are the places which are frequented at night until the early morning by the fearless roe or the foolish young hart.†

We have spoken of the wild poppy as one of the flowers which our Saviour may have included under the generic name of "lilies of the field." The poppy is, however, extensively cultivated for the sake of the opium which is obtained from it, and was doubtless known to the ancients, though no allusion to it is met with in the Scriptures. It is a taller and much stronger plant than the wild variety, generally attaining the height of three and a half or four feet. The flower is white, and the seed is thrown broadcast in the field, which is carefully inclosed with a hedge. The drug is obtained in the following manner: when the plant has attained a certain size, each stem is tied sufficiently tight to prevent the sap from rising higher, and an incision is made for it to ooze out: this sap, hardened by evaporation and the heat of the sun, constitutes what is called opium, of which laudanum is a decoction. After the juice has been obtained in the manner we have described, the tie is unfastened, that the seed may be brought to maturity. From this seed an oil is extracted, which, though not wholly free from the noxious qualities of the drug, is used both as food and to burn. The poppy is cultivated in Turkey, in the central part of the plateau of Asia Minor, about the region of Afion Karahissar, which takes its name from the drug *afion*, meaning opium. It is not much used in the country now, the shops in which it was smoked at the capital being shut up, we believe. The Turkish opium is said to bring a higher price in China than that which is raised in India.



The Opium Poppy.

* Cant. ii., 2.

† Cant. viii., 14.

A treatise on botany, however, would alone do justice to the immense variety and great beauty of the wild flowers of Bible lands. We have only sought to represent the general impression produced upon the Oriental mind. The same might be said of flowering shrubs and trees, whether wild or cultivated in gardens, such as the lilac and several varieties of acacia, the peacock and the silk-tree, and the "pride of India" or "Solomon's tree." Among the wild shrubs, however, there are two—one the denizen of the plain, the other of the mountain—which affect the landscape too strongly by their general diffusion to be passed over in silence. The oleander grows to the height of twelve or fifteen feet, and is confined to the banks of the rivers—the Jordan, the Kishon, the Orontes, and most of the streams of Western Asia—often forming a thick border of deep green, varied in the spring by bright red flowers. The leaves are narrow, and six inches long. The plant often grows on the banks of a torrent, which contains water only during the rainy season. It is a marked and peculiar feature of the East. So is the "tree-strawberry:" its fruit is fair but insipid, round, rather orange than red, and of the size of a strawberry. Its little bell-shaped flowers are white and in clusters; but its more marked peculiarity lies in the redness of its bark and the glossy green of its foliage, which give the landscape a tint unlike that of any other shrub or bush. All the peculiarities of natural scenery have their share in forming the minds of those who come in daily contact with them.

We should not forget that the fruit-trees, and even the flowers and shrubs we have described, have a native origin, and existed, therefore, in ancient times. They may have been improved by the lapse of ages, but rice, coffee, and tobacco alone have been imported. Many of the productions of Western Asia, however, have been transported to Europe, conferring untold benefits upon its population.

CHAPTER VII.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS.—CATTLE, SHEEP, AND GOATS.

We have already spoken of the ox as being the animal to which the people of Western Asia are exclusively indebted for the cultivation of the soil, although the ass is sometimes made to bear the yoke by his side. The horse is deemed too noble, and perhaps too spirited a creature, to be employed in labor of this nature. Mules were rare in very ancient times, possessed by the rich alone, and used not in carrying burdens, as at present, but exclusively for riding.

There must doubtless have been a time when the ox was wild, and man was compelled to till the ground with his own unaided hand; but that time lies beyond the memory of man. The oldest historical records, next to the Holy Scriptures, which we possess, are engraved upon the granite monuments of Egypt, in the language of signs, commonly called hieroglyphics (sacred carvings), having been thus designated by the Greeks on account of their knowledge being confined to the priesthood. It appears from these monuments that the ancient Egyptians depended for the cultivation of their fields upon the labors of the ox, and that their estimation of the value of this animal was such as to lead them to offer him divine honors. Their principal object of worship consisted of a bull, whose breed was preserved with the greatest care, and whose body was embalmed after death, and buried amidst the lamentations of the whole nation. The Hebrews had become conversant with this idolatrous worship during their two hundred years' residence in Egypt. There is every reason to believe that many of them participated in the idolatrous practices of their Egyptian masters; and their attachment to these rites was so strong that, though they had every reason to hate their cruel oppressors, yet they were scarcely withdrawn from their tyranny when they constrained Aaron to make them a golden calf,

that they might worship it after the Egyptian mode.* Indeed that whole generation of Israelites had to be destroyed, during forty years' wanderings in the wilderness, to eradicate from the people's hearts their attachment to that temporary home for which they yearned, and whose slavery and idolatry they preferred to the land of freedom. Yet not even thus could this form of idolatry be obliterated from the mind of the Israelite; as he guided the plow, following his patient ox, which also threshed his wheat upon the threshing-floor, he was constantly reminded of the great value of this animal, which has ever been in the East, more than in any other land, the dependence and help of the agriculturist. And so Jeroboam, when he had successfully led the rebellion of the ten tribes of Israel against the son of Solomon, anxious to prevent the people from going up to Jerusalem yearly, and from being tempted to return to their old allegiance, set up two golden calves—one at Dan, at the foot of Hermon, the northern extremity of his dominions; the other at Bethel, near his southern border, a spot peculiarly sacred to the mind of the Hebrew.† These idols continued to be the object of Israel's worship until the destruction of their kingdom, and their forcible removal from the land.

But the Egyptians and the Israelites were not the only ancient nations that understood the value of the ox. It was probably the first animal tamed by man for the sake of the service he could render. It even appears to have been the first commercial medium, before the precious metals came into use, as was the case until lately in South Africa; hence the first coins made were stamped with the effigy of an ox. The earliest sculptures bear images of this animal as used by man, and the earliest histories represent him in a state of domesticity. Cattle were owned by Abraham‡ and by the Canaanites.§ Job possessed a thousand yoke of oxen;‖ and the Hebrews owned many in Egypt,¶ which they took away with them.** So common had the animal become in the neighboring nations, that when the Israelites destroyed the Midianites they captured no less than seventy-two thousand head of cattle.††

The cattle of Palestine are generally small, and decidedly in-

* Exod. xxxii., 4–6.
† 1 Kings xii., 28, 29; Gen. xxxv., 14, 15.
‡ Gen. xii., 16; xiii., 7.
§ Gen. xx., 14.
‖ Job xlii., 12.
¶ Exod. ix., 4.
** Exod. xii., 38.
†† Numb. xxxi., 33.

ferior to those of more northern climes. The cause is doubtless to be found in the scanty pastures of a land laid waste for many centuries by ever-returning foes, and many of whose springs of water have been drying up; but there are districts in which the cattle are finer, and in a far better condition. There are probably as fine "bulls of Bashan" now grazing on the plains of the Hauran as there were in King David's time.* The table-lands of Asia Minor produce, in many parts, still finer cattle, not inferior probably to those of ancient times.

The ox which Solon of Crotona is said first to have carried on his back, then to have killed with a single blow of his fist on the forehead, and finally to have devoured entire, can not have been of a very great size. On the other hand, however, the mummies of the Egyptian bull, deified under the name of *Apis*, prove that those animals fully attained the size of our cattle of colder climates, a result owing, doubtless, to a choice and abundant diet, as was the case with the heroes of Homeric times.

When oxen are not actually at work, they are sent to the pasture with the rest of the herd. The latter is made up of all the cattle belonging to the village or town. Large proprietors, however, have their own herds, which graze in different parts of their farms or upon the public lands. In all cases the cattle are accustomed to collect just outside of the village, town, or farm premises, at an early hour in the morning, when the herdsman appears, generally accompanied by his dog, and usually carrying a loaded pistol in his belt, and a stick in his hand, at one end of which is a large knob or ball. When the herd is large, several herdsmen are employed, aided by lads, who are training for the business. These people are rough, both in appearance and in character, a natural consequence of the life they lead. Following the cattle from morning until night over the uncultivated portions of the land, they must often defend their charge against robbers, and are not unfrequently compelled to fight the wolves, and the more rare panther, which seek to prey upon the herd.† It is an arduous life, and those alone among the people pursue it who can find no

* Psa. xxii., 12; Ezek. xxxix., 18; see also Porter, "Giant Cities of Bashan," p. 15.

† 1 Sam. xxi., 7; xxii., 17–19.

easier mode of support.* The herdsman's wages consist of a small sum paid him for each head of cattle committed to his charge.

The village herd contains not only such cattle as are not needed in the field for the ensuing day, but all the domestic animals owned by the villagers which can be spared and sent to feed in the fields. There are the oxen, the bulls, the cows, and the calves of various ages; the she-asses and their colts, with perhaps some superannuated *paterfamilias* of a jackass, no longer able to work, and favored with his board; there is the huge and ponderous buffalo, accompanied by its calf, whose clumsy gambols excite the admiration of the whole drove; and if the village possess no flock of sheep or goats, a few of these animals are interspersed with the motley crew. As they proceed on the highway toward the fields, and especially when they return, with brisker step, toward home by the same road, a cloud of dust marks their progress in the dry summer season. We have often stood, or sat, about sunset, at the entrance of a village, to see the herd come in. It is the merriest hour of the day, for all the little children then rush out to meet the drove and have a gambol and a chase home, each after his own pet lamb, calf, or colt. Horses and camels are never herded promiscuously with other animals, but feed by themselves.

We have had occasion to notice some of the habits of cattle in the East, when spending a few days at a time at the farms of friends. The cattle of different localities differ both as to form and color. Those of Balu-kesar, in Asia Minor, are the finest in the country, and resemble the cattle of Southern Russia. They are comparatively large, well formed, and gray, with black extremities. At Aleppo we have seen cattle which resemble those of Germany in miniature, gracefully proportioned and of a fine uniform red.

The herd is always ruled by the most powerful bull, usually a strong, wiry young animal, which brooks no competitor. It often happens that, after many a fight, the conqueror drives his rival away from the herd; the latter wanders about the fields, bellowing with impotent rage, and trampling or devouring the standing grain.† It is these bulls especially that are

* Amos vii., 14.

† Virgil, "Georgics," bk. iii.

dangerous, for they attack any one that happens to come in their neighborhood.* Reconciliation of the foes in such a case is impossible, and all that is left the herdsman to do is to catch the infuriated beast and appropriate his strength to the service of the plow. We had once the good fortune to witness the capturing of such an animal. He had been roaming about and doing much mischief for several days, when two horsemen were sent out to bring him in. Each of them was provided with a long rope, one end of which was firmly fastened to his saddle-bow, while the other was tied into a noose or "lasso," held open by the rider at the end of a forked pole. When they approached the bull, he started to run, and they gave chase, riding on each side of him, and thus succeeded in flinging the two lassos around his horns. At the same instant one of the horsemen spurred his animal so as to take the lead of the bull, while the other held somewhat back, in order to prevent his running at his companion's horse. The bull, however, was not inclined to submit: making a violent effort, he broke one of the ropes, and rushing at the nearest rider, dashed both him and his horse to the ground, and was off again through the plain. It took the prostrate man a few moments to recover from the shock. We could distinctly hear the two men scolding each other for their mishap; but no great harm having been done, and knowing that the eyes of all the people of the farm and its hamlet were upon them, they were soon riding after their escaped victim, and this time with better success. We now saw them coming up at full speed, the bull running between the two horsemen, the leader appearing to drag him with the rope fastened to his horns, while the other held him back. But the hardest feat was yet to come. The party came rushing toward the house, and grazed the trunk of a fine terebinth in the foreground of the building. The leader instantly making a circuit of the tree, leaped out of his saddle and began to twist the rope around its trunk. But the bull was not yet ready to give in. He ran so fast around the tree to disengage himself that it seemed doubtful for a few minutes whether he would not succeed in thwarting his pursuers and effecting his escape. In the mean time, however, the other rider

* Exod. xxi., 28, 29.

had dismounted and come to the rescue. He caught the animal by the tail, and, giving it a peculiar twist, brought him down to the ground, when his feet were tied together in a twinkling, and he became quite still and powerless.

On another occasion we saw a bull that was being led in the manner above described break loose from one of the riders, while the other adroitly fastened the end of his rope to a tree by the road-side; the animal, thus tied, succeeded in keeping at bay a number of men for several hours.

The nomads of the present day often keep cattle which are tended by their herdsmen;* they have not unfrequently a mark burned with a hot iron upon one of their haunches or shoulders, just as we see it in the Egyptian sculptures.†

People who are unacquainted with the habits of these tribes suppose that they roam about at hap-hazard, and that there is no plan in their migrations. This is not the case, however; all the wanderers with whom we are acquainted possess settled and permanent habitations, which they occupy during the coldest part of the winter. These abodes of theirs are rude indeed, often the ruined dwellings of former generations, but more frequently mud-hovels, sadly in want of repair, and generally shared by their cattle. During this period, the latter are mostly fed with straw, which the nomads obtain either by sowing fields themselves, or through plunder.‡ The greater part of the summer is spent by them on the sides of high mountains, where grass is abundant and flies and gnats do not torment the cattle. Here the people dwell in tents, but shelter their flocks and herds in permanent booths, constructed of branches of trees, and repaired each successive summer.§ The interval of country between their winter and summer abodes is traveled over by regular stages in the spring and autumn, as rapidly as the condition of the herds and the flocks will allow.

In the warm climate of Palestine, booths often suffice for the winter shelter of the flocks. We have seen them thus protected even in much higher latitudes, and particularly throughout the extensive plains to the north and south of Sivri-hissar, where the people, like Jacob in Succoth, live in houses, and

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* Gen. xiii., 2; xxx., 43.
† Wilkinson, ii., fig. 366.
‡ Gen. xxvi., 12; Judg. vi., 3, 4, 6.
§ Gen. xxxiii., 17.

shelter under booths their fine flocks of sheep and the Angora goats, for which that region is celebrated.* The Arab tribes, however, make their yearly migrations northward instead of ascending mountains, of which, except in the Hauran, their country is destitute. The great tribe of the Enezeh leads the van, and, when unchecked, crosses the Euphrates and the Tigris and overruns the whole of Mesopotamia.

It is worthy of note that beef is rarely eaten in Western Asia. One never sees it exposed in the markets of even the largest Turkish or Arab cities, except where Europeans are numerous enough to create a demand, and even there the meat stalls of the quarters occupied chiefly by the natives contain nothing but mutton and an occasional kid. It is not that there seems to be a prejudice against the use of beef, but rather that the animal is considered too valuable to be slaughtered for food; and, moreover, it is never fattened for the market, while the flesh of sheep is always in fine condition.

In the greater part of Asia Minor it is customary for every family, in the autumn, to buy a young bullock or a cow, which is killed, the flesh made into sausages, or salted, pressed, and then, well seasoned with a preparation of pounded garlic, strong spices, etc., it is dried and forms the essential winter provision of *pasturma*. This is also an important item of exportation to other parts of the East, the most highly esteemed quality being prepared at Cæsarea, in Asia Minor.

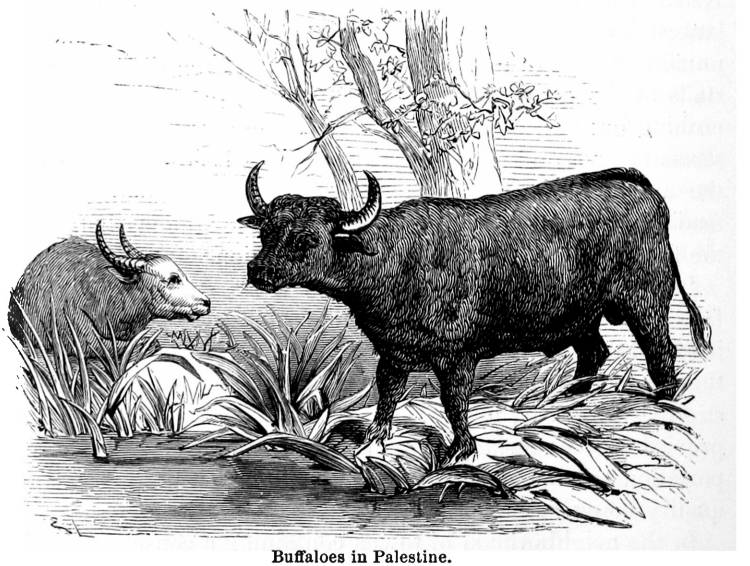
In the neighborhood of towns containing a considerable European population, diseased or accidentally injured cattle are killed, and their flesh sold in the market; but in the interior, on the contrary, the traveler occasionally meets with the carcass of an ox by the wayside or in the open field. The Hebrews, likewise, appear to have made but a moderate use of the flesh of cattle, which was mostly eaten by them in connection with their sacrifices. This appears to have been the case with the Israelites in the desert, for they would not so often have hankered after the "flesh-pots" of Egypt, had they been in the habit of slaughtering their cattle and sheep for food.† We shall speak elsewhere of the offering of cattle in sacrifice.

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* See "Travels in little-known Parts of Asia Minor," vol. ii., p. 208, etc.

† Exod. xvi., 3.

The buffalo, which is now found in all the Western countries of the continent of Asia, and even in Egypt and Italy, is a much larger and more powerful animal than the ox. His dingy black hide is almost destitute of hair, and his ponderous horns incline backward, almost lying upon his neck and shoulders. His great strength is turned to valuable account by his master, both for the purpose of plowing and of drawing the heaviest carts. This uncouth beast is particularly valuable in

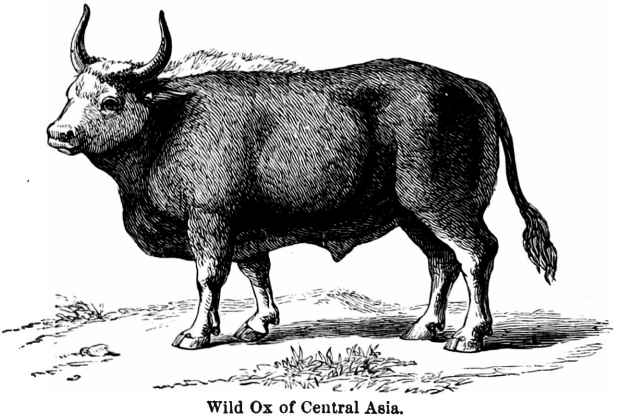


Buffaloes in Palestine.

all swampy districts, which the malaria renders almost uninhabitable, even to animals; indeed, buffaloes can not live without the opportunity of frequently plunging and wallowing in mud and water. They are chiefly seen, when not employed by their masters, feeding in the swamps and lying in the muddy streams with barely their noses above the surface. These animals are of Indian origin, and are now found in a wild state, inhabiting the great swampy jungles of Hindoostan. The wild buffalo, called *arna* by the Hindoos, is fierce and untamable, in size one-third larger than the domestic species, and of such power and vigor as by his charge to prostrate a well-sized elephant. The tame buffalo, which bears in India the distinctive name *bhainsa*, appears to have been introduced into Western

Asia about the time of the conquest of Persia by the Arabs, in the seventh century, which accounts for the fact that no mention is made of him, not only in the Hebrew Scriptures, but, indeed, in any of the ancient Greek and Latin authors. He is now found in Palestine, and particularly about the swamps of the Hooleh, or Lake Merom.

We have been thus particular in describing this animal, because we deem it important to point out the changes which have taken place in Bible lands since the writing of the Scriptures, that we may the better understand what remains unaltered. We are aware that some eminent scholars have claimed that there are references in the Old Testament to the arna, or wild buffalo. No doubt, the rendering of the word *reem* by "unicorn" in our English version is a mistake, probably derived from the Septuagint. The animal referred to must certainly have had two horns,* and was very fierce and powerful. But we have no proof that the arna ever existed to the west of Persia; and it is impossible to refute the evidence of the late introduction of the *bhainsa*, or tame buffalo, which in all Western Asia bears one of its Indian names, *jamooz*.



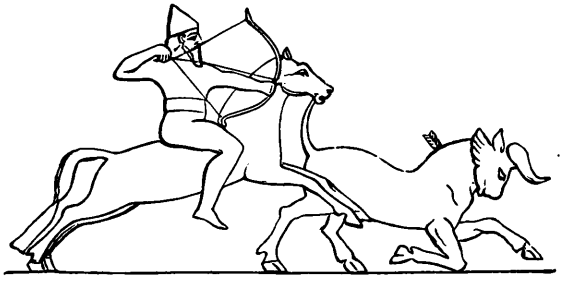
Wild Ox of Central Asia.

Job, who probably lived in the Hauran, might describe an animal which existed only in a distant country.† But the other passages imply that the people who dwelt on both sides of the Jordan and the Dead Sea were not unacquainted with the

* Deut. xxxiii., 17.

† Job xxxix., 9–12.

*reem.** We incline to the opinion that the animal called *reem* by the Hebrews was a very large and powerful wild ox, which has now disappeared from Europe and Western Asia, and is only found in regions north of the Caspian and Himalaya. It is fierce and hard to tame, and is known to naturalists by the name of *Bos Sylhetanus*. Very similar to this, but of larger size, and still fiercer, is the wild cattle of Europe, to which Pliny, in his "Natural History," gives the name of Urus; and Cæsar describes as the gigantic ox of the Hercynian forest, in stature scarcely below an elephant, and so fierce as to spare neither man nor beast, should it meet with either. This view of the question is confirmed by the fact that a large, hairy, and powerful bull is represented upon the sculptured walls of the Nimrood palace, near Mossul, as pursued and slain by the king and his hunters; while the hunting scenes of the later structures of Khorsabad and Koyoonjik do not contain representations of this animal—an indication that he had, at the later period, disappeared from the surrounding region.†



Chase of the Wild Ox, or Reem. (Isa. xxxiv., 7.)

We infer, therefore, that the common cattle of the ancients bore the same relation, as to size and temper, to the fierce and indomitable *reem*, or wild bull of Asia, that the patient and sluggish *bhainsa* now bears to the fierce and savage *arna* of India; and we regard the Assyrian sculptures of the wild ox, and his existence in the northern parts of the Asiatic continent, as interesting confirmations of the Biblical allusions to the facts of the natural history of ancient times.

The meek and gentle sheep has probably contributed, from

* Numb. xxiii., 22; Psa. xxii., 21; xxix., 6; Isa. xxxiv., 6, 7.
† Layard, ii., 327.

the remotest period, to supply the wants of mankind quite as much, if not more, than cattle. It seems, indeed, to have been the first animal brought into a state of domesticity; for we read of Abel that he was a shepherd, or "keeper of sheep," while his brother Cain, following the first and principal occupation of the race, was "a tiller of the ground."*

We have, indeed, reason to think that this was the first of the brute creation to suffer the consequences of man's fall; for it is a natural supposition that the garments of skin with which our first parents were clothed before they were driven out of Eden were taken from this animal, which they were probably then taught to offer up as an atonement for sin.†

This interesting animal has ever thriven in the north temperate zone, in many parts of which it is still found in a wild state. The wild sheep, the *moufflon* of Buffon, is met with at this day in Taurus and Anti-taurus, in Asia Minor, and, we presume, upon the mountains of Koordistan and Armenia, which are but the continuation of those ranges; and a variety of the same animal exists in the Rocky Mountains in North America. But the sheep is not, by nature, fitted to climb upon rocky heights, although his thick coat protects him from their chilling winds. He is evidently a lover of the plain, and thrives best in the domestic state, under man's effectual protection.

The number of sheep produced and reared in the region of country whose four corners are washed by the Caspian, the Black, and the Mediterranean seas, and the Persian Gulf, is truly amazing, and almost incredible, if we may judge from the immense flocks which are constantly pouring west and south-west from early spring until the end of autumn, in an almost continuous stream. The flocks which are reared in the northern portion of the region of country just described go to Constantinople and the adjacent provinces, but many are sold all along the way, to supply the wants of the towns and villages through which they pass. It has been estimated that not less than a million and a half of sheep annually reach the capital alone, from the region indicated, beside those which are supplied from European Turkey and the Danubian provinces. They are seventeen or eighteen months on the way.

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* Gen. iv., 2.

† Gen. iii., 21; comp. with Gen. iv., 4.

The sheep reared in the southern part of Koordistan and in Mesopotamia supply the region of Tarsoos (Tarsus), Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, going down along the sea-shore in order to avoid the incursions of predatory Arabs. Besides these, there are smaller localities in Western Asia where also sheep are reared, and supply the wants of particular districts. The region of Caramania, a part of Southern Asia Minor, for instance, is famous for its sheep, which are exported to the western part of the peninsula; and no one who has gone into the desert and met any of the Arab tribes, in their spring or autumn migrations, with their numerous sheep and goats, many of which are disposed of in the border towns, can fail to consider the wilderness a great breeding-place for flocks.



Moufflon, or Wild Sheep of Western Asia.

The sheep that are exported are males, or rams, the ewes being kept at home for breeding purposes. It is ever the former that are killed by the Christians at Easter, and by the Muslims at the "Feast of Sacrifices," or *Corban-Bairam*. Rams were likewise mostly offered in sacrifice by the Jews.* The Tabernacle was covered with rams' skins;† and the yearly tribute of Misha, king of Moab, who was a sheep-master, consisted of 100,000 lambs (young rams) and 100,000 unsheared rams, paid to Ahab, king of Israel.‡

The foregoing statements correspond with those we meet in

* Exod. xxix., 38. "Lambs" signifies, in the Hebrew, young rams.
† Exod. xxv., 5.
‡ 2 Kings iii., 4.

the Old Testament respecting the numerous flocks reared in these same regions in ancient days. Job, before his misfortunes, owned seven thousand sheep, which number was doubled on the return of his prosperity.* The flocks and herds of Abraham, and Lot, his nephew, who had migrated from the sheep-breeding Mesopotamia, became so large that the land of Judea could not contain them, and they were constrained to separate.† Just before crossing the Jordan, the Israelites were commanded to avenge themselves on the Midianites, and took the spoil of all their flocks, amounting in sheep alone to 675,000.‡ At the dedication of the Temple, King Solomon offered in sacrifice 120,000 sheep.§ In Palestine, the chief pastures for sheep and goats are on the east side of Jordan, the Sea of Galilee, and even the Dead Sea; and it was here the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh preferred to settle down with their numerous flocks and herds, rather than pass over Jordan with the rest of Israel, and adopt husbandry as their mode of life.‖

The journeyings of the flocks of sheep from their breeding-places in Armenia, Koordistan, and Mesopotamia, to the distant markets where they are sold, take place in ordinary times through peaceable regions, and, as wealthy and influential proprietors always have a personal interest in their success, the flocks are rarely molested; still, the animal is tender, and his coat, which is left unshorn, in order to enhance his value, increases the weariness of the way. They travel by short stages, like Abraham and Jacob of old. We have often watched them as they passed on their long journey: the Armenian or Koordish shepherd always walks before, dressed in traveling costume, armed with a knife and pistol, and engaged, as is the case with most shepherds in the East, in spinning woolen yarn with a ponderous spindle. His diminutive ass walks before, carrying his provision and his cloak, made of thick felt, and oftentimes bearing in one or both sides of the saddle-bags a tired or disabled sheep, which is thus conveyed to the next market. When the flock is very large—and it not unfrequently contains several thousand head—there are three or four shepherds,

* Job i., 3; xlii., 12. † Gen. xiii., 6. ‡ Numb. xxxi., 32.
§ 1 Kings viii., 63. ‖ Numb. xxxii., 1–5.

some of whom go behind to look after stragglers, with dogs watching for the same purpose.

But these flocks are temporary, the men in charge simply conducting them out of the country to dispose of them. They are "hirelings," and neither become attached to the flock nor the flock to them. A shepherd's life, and the habits and character of the animal, are so frequently referred to in the Scriptures, and constitute, moreover, so important a chapter in Oriental life, that they seem to deserve our special attention.

All writers upon this subject, even those best acquainted with the East, have apparently failed to notice the distinction between the shepherd and the goat-herd, and between the habits and treatment of sheep and of goats; thus failing to explain some of the most interesting passages of Holy Writ. One would naturally gather from their statements that sheep and goats are always led together to the same pastures, and kept in the same inclosures; nothing, however, could be farther from the reality. It may be the case, indeed, when very few animals of both kinds are kept, but not otherwise.

We have already spoken of both these animals going forth to feed with the cattle, under charge of the herdsman; but a professional shepherd understands too well the difference between them to keep them together. The goat thrives best on rocky declivities, and is so fond of young leaves that he generally feeds among the bushes, and sometimes succeeds in climbing into a tree in order to obtain them, whereas sheep occupy the plains and gentle slopes, and always prefer fresh grass. The goat feeds all day long, and rarely minds the summer heat enough to stand for a few moments in the shadow of a tree or a rock: he is driven into the fold for the night, and let out again in the early morning. The sheep, on the other hand, are led to pasture only toward sunset during the greater part of the year, and return home in the morning, or spend the day, sometimes the noonday hours only, in the breezy shade of a friendly grove, or under booths prepared for the purpose.*

It is only during the coldest part of winter that the sheep are housed for the night. But even at that season the shepherd endeavors to keep them out-of-doors as much as possible, for

* Cant. i., 7.

their young are born from January till the beginning of March, according to the climate, and have to be kept with the ewes in the field, that the latter may obtain sufficient nourishment for the support of the lambs, which can not be conveyed to and fro between the house and the pasturage. This is the most trying season of the year for the flock. Snow falls and frost sets in, which kills many of the lambs, although the shepherd seeks to save all he can by carrying them under his cloak and "in his bosom."* This period, too, tries his own powers of endurance, for it is the rainy season. He cuts small branches of trees, and lays them in a pile, to avoid the consequences of standing in the wet. We have frequently known instances where the skin has peeled off completely from the soles of the poor shepherd's feet by such exposure. The only sleep he can secure is by lying on such a pile of branches or fagots, enveloped in his heavy felt cloak, or crouching in a sitting posture, with its stiff, heavy folds set up over him like a tent. A shepherd once told us that, being alone with his flock on one occasion, he went to sleep at night in this latter position, and found himself, on waking in the morning, half buried under a heavy fall of snow, with the sheep and dogs floundering around him. It is thus that, eighteen centuries ago, the shepherds of Bethlehem were "abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night," when they saw the angel-vision, and were bidden to go and find the "Saviour," Son of the shepherd-king, "lying in a manger."†

We have been kept awake on stormy and rainy nights, while endeavoring to sleep in some little mud-hovel, by the flock in the plain outside, the tinkling of whose little bells announced them busy cropping the tender grass. It is, moreover, on such a night that the wolves are out, and most active; they are stout fellows, as we can testify, and a match for the most powerful dog in the country. It is on such a night, too, that the dogs are drowsy, shake off the rain-drops from their ears, and seek the shelter of a bush or a tree. We could hear the shepherd's voice shouting to them from time to time, to be on the lookout; an occasional shot was fired to rouse them up, and then a fight occurred; the growling and barking of dogs,

* Isa. xl., 11. † Luke ii., 8-12.

and the shouting of the shepherds, and the firing of pistols, producing altogether an uproar of the most exciting character.

But danger sometimes comes from another source: when one of those sudden storms of rain arises which characterize the autumnal season in Western Asia, the helpless flock of sheep, frightened by the voice of thunder, huddle together under the nearest tree, and are not unfrequently killed by the lightning. We have repeatedly known a large number of them to be thus destroyed; and the shepherd has himself sometimes met with the same fate.*

The life of a shepherd is arduous.† His duties are too severe to be faithfully performed by hirelings.‡ It is rare, therefore, to find any one engaged in this calling simply for hire. Owners of flocks engage shepherds generally by bargaining for the delivery of a certain amount of curdled milk and cheese, and a fixed number of lambs and sheep, yearly, besides maintaining the flock undiminished; while the shepherds are paid for their trouble by whatever they can obtain beyond this. The latter, unlike Jacob of old, are apt to take advantage of the chapter of accidents to account for any decrease in the flock,§ and, like him, they are generally able to acquire, ere long, a flock of their own. A young man enters upon this calling simply because his father is in it; and having himself followed the flocks from boyhood, he has acquired that passionate fondness for the occupation which the most perilous and therefore most exciting modes of life are wont to call forth. On the line of the desert, and on the borders of the territory overrun by the Koordish and Turkmen tribes, not a little danger arises from the habits of these highway robbers, who, not content with driving away the flocks,‖ also frequently kill the shepherds, on the principle that "dead men tell no tales." The weakness of the Turkish government, indeed, allows the existence in all parts of the country of bands of robbers, who go about during the summer plundering travelers, demanding heavy ransoms from wealthy captives, and stopping the government mails, whenever they learn, through their numerous agents, that they carry large sums of money. These robbers

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* Job i., 16; Psa. lxxviii., 48. † Gen. xxxi., 40. ‡ John x., 12, 13.
§ Gen. xxxi., 39. ‖ Judg. vi., 4.

dare not show themselves in the towns and villages, but depend for their subsistence on the provisions they take from the helpless shepherds; the latter often, in consequence, aiding in this nefarious business, especially when in charge of flocks belonging to officers of the government, with whom the robbers share their gains. When the latter abstain from plundering the flock, they often claim a present as a reward for their moderation, and protection against other bands; so did David to Nabal, when he led the life of a *kleft*, or bandit.*

The shepherd leads an isolated life; his wanderings are not extensive. He feeds his flock either on public lands, or on a small run he has hired from a land-proprietor. A small booth for himself, and a much larger one for his flock, surrounded by a strong hedge, constitute his premises. The sheep-fold, however, often consists of a mere inclosure, surrounded by a palisade of thorn-bushes, or a wall of loose stones with thorn-bushes upon the top; and this is usually an effectual barrier against the wolves. The door consists of a few sticks laid across the entrance, and here the shepherd and his dog watch all night. Thieves sometimes climb up the wall and push aside the bushes; and sheep-stealing is as much a profession in Turkey as horse-thieving in some other countries.† By the mention of a porter in our Lord's parable, we are not to understand that there is a special porter to the sheep-fold, but simply that a shepherd acts as porter, opening or shutting the door. Our Lord's object in mentioning it was to allude to the great Porter of God's kingdom, who is Jehovah himself, and who has opened the door of the Church to the great Shepherd to enter in and govern his people. In the winter, particularly when the season is severe, the sheep are stabled, the door is locked, and the dog watches outside.

The shepherd seldom visits his family, who live in a neighboring village; but his little boys and girls often go to and fro, carrying to him home provisions, and bringing back milk, cheese, and an occasional lamb, which are the envy of the neighbors, who live upon the products of the soil.

The shepherd's garb is simple, consisting of a woolen coat of coarse-fulled cloth (*abba*), trowsers of cotton or woolen home-

* 1 Sam. xxv., 4–8.

† John x., 1–3.

spun, and a leather apron, the badge of his calling; his head is covered with a felt cap and turban; his cloak, also, is of thick felt, either smooth or shaggy, and without sleeves. It is often so stiff that it will stand up like a little tent. But the Bedawy shepherd, like all the dwellers of the desert of both sexes, wears a simple cotton shirt, generally of a dark blue, and a cloak, or burnoos, of camel's hair, with a gay handkerchief thrown over his head, and bound round his temples with a cord of camel's hair. But all the shepherds, both in the desert and elsewhere, are usually shod with the modern substitute for the sandal; the latter is, however, yet seen in Egypt and in the desert, and is in general use in Japan. The *charookh* consists, first, of a long strip or band of white woolen cloth, wound like a bandage around the toes, foot, and ankle, and so up to the knee, when it is turned down again, and the end made fast in the folds; this answers the purpose of a thick, close-fitting stocking, but is far more firm and impervious to thorns. The shoe itself, if we may so call it, consists of a piece of strong, untanned skin (wild boar is preferred by the Christians on account of its durability, while Muslims use buffalo, from religious scruples); this is cut somewhat larger than the sole of the foot, and is made fast by means of strings or thongs of leather, which gather the edges, and are tied around the foot very much like the ancient sandals. This kind of shoe is used not only by shepherds but by the inhabitants of all the remote villages; and it is worn by the peasantry of Greece, Italy, and Spain. It seems to have been used by the poorer classes in ancient times;* but muleteers and farmers, who live near large towns, use a heavy boot instead. Those who have worn this kind of shoe generally prefer it to any other, as the Indians of America do their moccasin, to which it bears some resemblance. Still it is apt to slip in ascents or descents, from lack of a heel.

The shepherd sometimes carries a pistol in his belt, always a knife or dagger. From the leather strap or belt fastened around his waist often hangs a flute in its wooden case. This is made of a reed, perforated throughout, and having the edges of the upper extremity so sharp that, when blown upon in a peculiar manner, a sound is produced very much like that of a

* Gen. xiv., 23; Mark vi., 9; John i., 27; Acts xii., 8.



Shepherd playing on the Naÿ, or Flute. (Psa. xxiii., 2.)

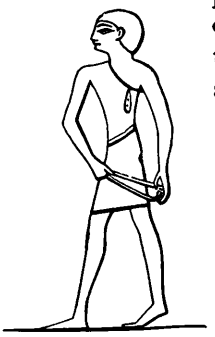
common flute.* This instrument is called a *naÿ*, and is used by some dervishes in their religious worship; but being rather difficult to play upon, many shepherds, especially young lads, procure a common wooden flageolet at the nearest market-town, the fac-simile of which are found in terra cotta among the ruins of ancient cities. Besides this flute, the shepherd fastens to his belt a stout stick or "rod" of hard wood, nearly three feet long, which is an important weapon, wielded by his practiced hand,

* Wilkinson, i., fig. 141.

whether for a close encounter or to be hurled at an enemy. This short stick may be considered as occupying the same place as the boomerang, the famous weapon of the Australian savages, which was known to the ancient Egyptians and Assyrians, and is represented in their sculptures.* It is still used as a formidable weapon by highway robbers.†

The shepherd's staff varies in length from four to six feet, and is made by cutting the branch of a tree, olive being generally preferred, which is barked, and the thicker end gradually, and with the aid of fire, bent into a semicircle. In this shape it is tied and left until thoroughly dry. This is the goat-herd's or shepherd's crook; and he uses it to stop or punish, at pleasure, his heedless sheep or goats; and for this reason it is used by goat-herds rather than shepherds. David's allusion to the "rod and staff" is thus explained.‡ They are weapons, the one of defense and the other of rule, in the shepherd's vigorous and devoted hand, and constitute the surest guarantee for the protection of the flock.

The invention of fire-arms has not superseded the old weapons of antiquity, and it is almost as common now to see a shepherd armed with a sling as it was in David's time.§ This is particularly true of the Bedawin, or Arabs of the desert. Young lads wile away their time by throwing pebbles with their slings at marks which they set up, and we can, from personal observation, testify to the extreme accuracy of their aim. The ancient Israelites were also very skillful in the use of this weapon,‖ which used to be an instrument of war.



Ancient Sling. (1 Sam. xvii., 49.)

Every shepherd carries on his back a bag or wallet, as he goes into the fields, in which he puts his provision of food, usually consisting of bread and cheese, with an onion or two, and garlic; and he usually carries a little box containing a variety of spices which are used medicinally. This bag or

* Bonomi, 153-'55.

† "Travels in little-known Parts of Asia Minor," ii., 21-28.

‡ Psa. xxiii., 4.

§ 1 Sam. xvii., 40.

‖ Judg. xx., 16; 1 Chron. xii., 2.

scrip is sometimes of goat or horse hair; but the kind most commonly used is of the shepherd's own manufacture. He takes off the skin of a lamb entire (as described page 56), and carefully removes the hair; the extremities are then sewed up and slit into fine shreds, which hang down like tassels; two straps, passed over the shoulders, serve to carry the bag, whose mouth is kept closed by its own weight. This is the "scrip" constantly used by travelers on foot, or couriers, or runners carrying the post.*



Native Haversack, or Sachel, made of an entire Lamb-skin. (1 Sam. xvii., 40.)

As might be supposed, the isolation of the shepherds from the rest of the world, and the constant companionship of their sheep and dogs, generates a mutual attachment. Many of the sheep bear particular names, such as "Spotted," "Black-eyed," "Mother," etc., and they readily answer to the call of their master, as intelligently and faithfully as any dog.† It is also remarkable to notice the ease with which the shepherd is able to direct the movements of the entire flock, by means of peculiar cries or different modes of whistling. On a given signal, you see the sheep rushing toward him or scattering in every direction, standing still or defiling in regular order.‡ Some shepherds have a wonderful control of their flock; they will order the sheep to come down to the river's edge and drink, and, the moment they are about to do so, will shout to them to stop, the docile creatures instantly obeying. Nor will they heed the voice of a stranger. The experiment has been tried by persons who had doubts on this point; they have even assumed the garb of the shepherd, have imitated his cry, have called the sheep by name, but to no purpose: the sheep have invariably fled from the stranger.§ Yet sheep are very foolish animals; the whole flock will unhesitatingly run into danger, if only one or two set the example; or a silly lamb will gradually wander away from its companions, and then stand bleating and rushing hither and thither in despair, until the prowling wolf devour

* Matt. x., 10. † John x., 3. ‡ John x., 4. § John x., 5.

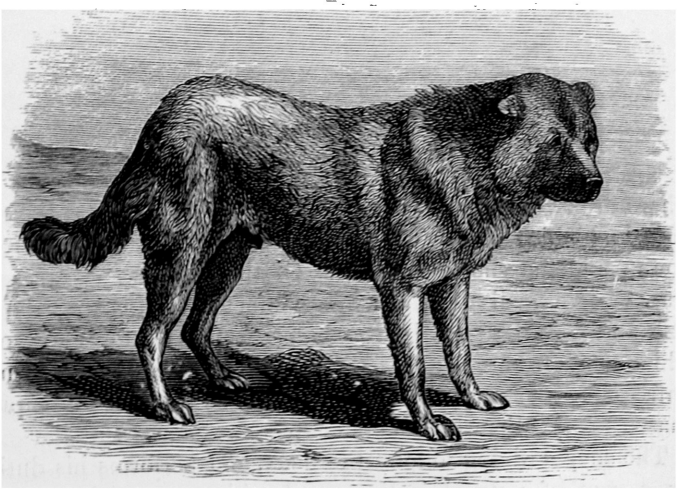
it; or the anxious shepherd, leaving the "ninety-and-nine" sheep at home, goes in search of the strayed one, and, finding it, "layeth it on his shoulders,"* holding its hind-feet in one hand and its fore-feet in the other, as represented in ancient sculptures, and thus conveys it in safety to the flock. "Verily he rejoiceth more of that sheep than of the ninety-and-nine which went not astray."†

When the flock goes to the pasture the shepherd usually leads the way, though an experienced old ram carrying a bell sometimes takes his place. There are usually not more than two or three such in a flock, and the shepherd could not easily be induced to part with them. These leaders have a mark upon the forehead, branded with a hot iron,‡ while the mark of the rest of the flock is made with a dye of a single color placed upon the forehead and back, different from the color of the neighboring flocks, so that every shepherd knows his own sheep. When the flock is led to the watering-place, if it be a well, the shepherd has to let down his bucket of leather and fill the troughs from which the sheep drink.§ The best watering-place for sheep is either a running stream, or a fountain whose water is conducted through a long line of stone or wooden troughs.‖ When they have reached the pasturage, the shepherd usually sits down, and, being irregular in his seasons of rest, is very apt to fall asleep, lulled by the continuous tinkling of the bells of his flock; and the sheep might gradually stray away from him, were it not for a device well adapted to the case. The shepherd wears on his right arm a woolen band, often tastefully knitted or woven by his mother, wife, or sister. When he sits down in the pasture, he calls to him one of the leaders, and ties the long loose end of the cord or band to his horns. These animals are so prone to follow one another's lead, that, should the flock begin to move away in any direction, the captive sheep makes such efforts to join them that he pulls at his master's arm, tinkling his bell incessantly, till he awakes him.

One of the pleasantest sights to be witnessed under the clear and brilliant sky of Western Asia is a flock of snow-white

* Luke xv., 5. † Matt. xviii., 13. ‡ Rev. xiii., 16.
§ Gen. xxix., 2, 10; Exod. ii., 17.
‖ "Travels in little-known Parts of Asia Minor," vol. ii., p. 208.

sheep* scattered over the surface of a fine green meadow; the lambs skipping and gamboling in frolic; the shepherd sitting on the soft turf, playing with his flute; his favorite shaggy dog by his side, keeping watch in all directions; and, to complete the picture, we might add the long-tailed magpie, jet-black with a white ring around its neck, perched upon the backs of the grateful sheep, or hovering about them, catching the flies that trouble these useful creatures. The beautiful pastoral contained in the twenty-third Psalm bears internal evidence of having been written by the shepherd-king, who had learned from his own experience to understand and appreciate the indescribable charms of this simple mode of life. How often, as the time drew nigh when the sheep must return to their fold, have we gazed upon that beautiful picture drawn by Isaiah: "He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young!"†

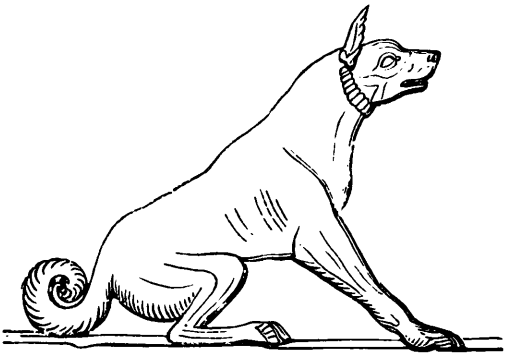


Oriental Shepherd-dog. (Job xxx., 1.)

But we must say a word in behalf of the faithful shepherd-dog, with which the Hebrews could not dispense any more than their modern successors.‡ We do not concur with the

* Cant. iv., 2. † Isa. xl., 11. ‡ Job xxx., 1.

sentiment expressed in the following sentence, *i. e.*, that "Oriental shepherd-dogs are a mean, sinister, ill-conditioned generation, kept at a distance, kicked about and half starved, with nothing noble or attractive about them." This description applies to the street dogs of Turkey, which are probably the descendants of half-tamed wolves and jackals, and possess the meanest qualities of both; but such a judgment is wholly unjust when applied to the shepherd-dog of Western Asia, which closely resembles those of the ancient Chaldeans, if we may judge from the accompanying copy of a Babylonian sculpture.



Shepherd-dog, from Babylonian Sculpture. (Psa. xxii., 20.)

There are two species of dogs in Turkey, whose breed is kept pure, and which really possess fine qualities, namely—the greyhound and the shepherd's dog. Of the latter there are several varieties, all of which are characterized by their large size, and white or slightly gray color, and black noses. Those which come from the region of Batoom, on the Black Sea, not unfrequently stand three feet high, and can not usually be purchased for less than forty dollars apiece.

The shepherd-dog follows the flock, and performs his duties by a sort of natural instinct, and without special training. We well remember that on one occasion a shepherd brought us a present of a beautiful pup, almost like a ball of white wool or silk. He was kept for six months as a pet in the house, and was the universal favorite. But one day the shepherd brought his flock to within half a mile of the place, and that very day the young dog disappeared. Having occasion to go

to the flock on the ensuing morning, what was our surprise, on approaching it, to spy our young favorite guarding the road by which we were advancing, and to hear him give the usual signal of a sharp bark to intimate the approach of a stranger, before he ran forward to lick our hand. Both we and the shepherd made every effort to induce him to give up this gypsy life, and return to the luxury of a house and home, but in vain; nothing could induce him even to pay a short visit to the place where he had been reared and so much petted.

These creatures are faithful, untiring, intelligent, and brave even to ferocity. They will allow themselves to be torn in pieces rather than cease fighting for the defense of their master and flock. We have known a panther to surprise the flock at night, when she was bravely attacked by a full-grown dog and three young ones, not a year old. One of the latter bit the panther in the face, so that the tooth of his upper jaw entered her eye, and that of the lower jaw held her mouth firmly closed; and though his shoulder was broken and his body terribly lacerated by the creature's claws, he did not give up until the other dogs had torn in pieces and killed the common enemy. It is not safe to pass in the neighborhood of a flock of sheep without first attracting the attention of the shepherds, that they may prevent the dogs from falling upon you. These creatures are especially dangerous when met with at dusk or at night; the natives then employ the expedient to which they resort in the case of wolves. They take off their long white girdle and let it trail upon the ground as they run. Both the wolf and the dog are intimidated by this, seeming to regard it as a trap, and keep away.

The shepherd-dogs are frequently employed by the proprietors of the flock, and sometimes by governors of towns, in making "battues" for the purpose of destroying wild boars, or wolves, or even bears, when they become troublesome by their increase. In such cases their master has to go with them, and their sagacity, fine scent, and courage can be depended upon.

What we have said thus far of the shepherd's habits and mode of life strictly applies to those only who pursue this business as their sole occupation. We shall speak hereafter of nomadic life, and will now simply remark that it is customary at the present day, as it has been all along at different periods of

history, for young women to engage in leading and tending a flock of sheep at no great distance from the dwelling of the family, whose assistance they can secure in case of need.* We also frequently see women of all ages, in the neighborhood of nomadic camps, driving about herds of cattle, or flocks of sheep and goats, and leading them to the well or river to water.†

It is customary among Christians to purchase a young lamb to be eaten at Easter, and the same thing is done by Muslims, at the feast of *Corban-Bairam.* These customs are evidently relics of the Jewish Passover. The lambs are brought into every town and village, and their white wool is often dyed red in patches, in order to enhance their beauty in the eyes of purchasers. The usual price is from twenty cents to a dollar, according to the locality. It is a great event for the children of a family, who may be seen leading the little pet about, and vying with each other who shall give it the nicest handful of grass. The fathers must have quite a struggle to bring about the slaughter of these favorites of the little ones; for many of them are spared, and become installed as members of the family; and for this reason two lambs are sometimes bought, only one of which is killed for the Easter festival. Thenceforward the lamb is the children's inseparable companion. It follows the little girls to a pasture close by, or runs behind a donkey the boys are riding to the vineyard, and at night the little ones dispute who shall have it for his bed-fellow. It goes to sleep with their little arms about its neck, or "lying in its master's bosom, and being unto him as a daughter." So it was with the poor man's "one little ewe lamb" in the parable of the prophet Nathan;‡ and many a time since that day has the rich and powerful sheik or aga, when desirous to entertain a passing traveler, "spared to take of his own flock," but has taken "the poor man's lamb and dressed it."§ Attention should also be paid to the prophet's specification, "a *ewe* lamb," as casting a characteristic of peculiar meanness upon the act of the sheik; for the ram is exclusively eaten by the rich, and al-

* Gen. xxix., 9, 12, 13; Exod. ii., 16.

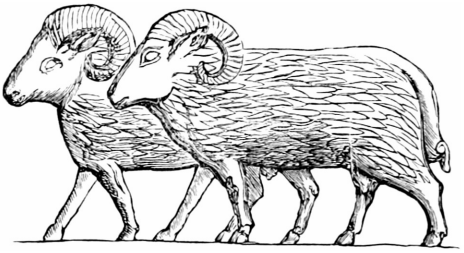
† "Innumerable goats and sheep crowded at the water, led by black-veiled Bedawy women."—STANLEY, "Sinai and Palestine," p. 85.

‡ 2 Sam. xii., 3.

§ 2 Sam. xii., 4.

ways preferred at an entertainment: its meat sells for double the price of the ewe in the market.

We have spoken elsewhere of the custom of killing an ox or cow in the autumn, and of putting up its flesh as winter provision for the family. The lamb purchased in Easter-week, and kept and fattened through the summer, is killed in the autumn, and its flesh is chopped up and partially cooked in the mass of fat obtained chiefly from the tail or rump. This is packed in jars, and a spoonful or two serves to flavor many a family meal through the winter. This is the "one sheep" referred to in Matt. xii., 11.



The Broad-tailed Sheep in Persia 2500 Years ago.

The common and the broad-tailed sheep are the only varieties of this animal known in the East. The latter seems to have originated in Arabia, for Herodotus speaks of such a sheep as occurring in that country.* This variety, however, appears to have been the only one in existence in Egypt and Palestine in the days of Moses, if we may judge from the directions contained in the Mosaic law with regard to the use of the fat tail, or "rump," of the sheep, in offering the animal in sacrifice.†

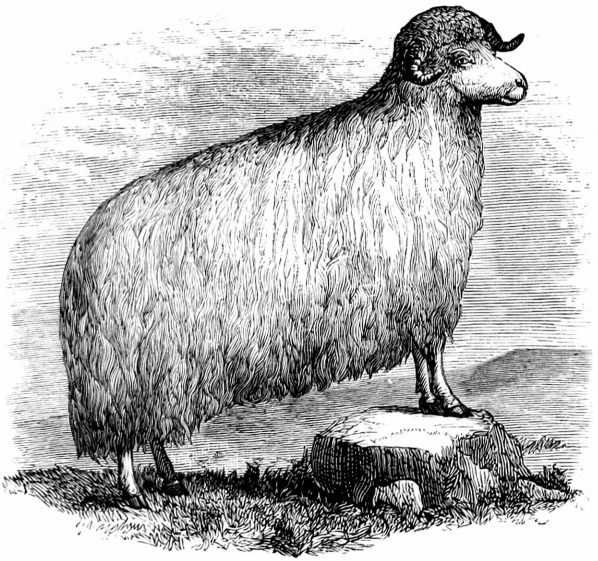
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* Bk. iii., § 113.

† Lev. iii., 9. The English translators of the Bible seem to have been embarrassed by the importance given by Moses to the fat tail of the sheep, which they call "rump." The Hebrew אליה is identical with the Arabic اَلْيَةٌ, which the Arabs pronounce *liyeh*, and apply only to the sheep's tail fat.

At a later period, or about 2300 years ago, Herodotus described it as occurring in Syria, and differing from the Greek sheep by having a tail "one cubit in width" (eighteen inches). It is now the common species in the Barbary States, in Egypt and Western Asia as far as the Anti-taurus, in Asia Minor, and the mountains of Koordistan, north of which it gives place to the common species. And it is proved that this was the variety described by Aristotle and Herodotus, from the excellent bass-reliefs of the animal sculptured among the ruins of Persepolis, in Persia.

The broad-tailed sheep is deservedly esteemed in the lands where it occurs, on account of its caudal appendage, which consists of an accumulation of delicate fat, a medium between tallow and butter, and an excellent substitute for lard. It enters largely into the preparation of Oriental dishes, being fresh and sweet, and by many preferred to butter, which, in hot weather, is apt to grow rancid, and never in those lands equals the butter of colder climates. The peculiar tail of this species of sheep consists of a mass of fat formed on each side of the caudal spine; its general form is nearly circular, resembling a



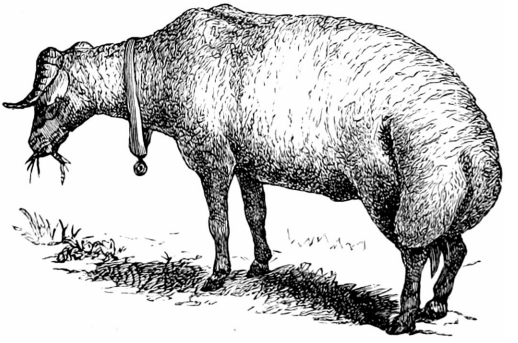
Broad-tailed Sheep, unshorn. (Exod. xxix., 22.)

chair cushion, while the tail proper extends several inches beyond it. When the wool is thick and long upon the animal, his form is effectually concealed. It is only when closely shorn that one can obtain an exact idea of this peculiarity. The preceding and following cut will show the appearance it presents before and after shearing. It certainly seems sometimes to be a great inconvenience to the poor creature; for though usually not more than twenty pounds in weight, it is not unfrequently three, and even four times as heavy.

This is the only variety of large-tailed sheep we have ever

met in Western Asia; nor, after many inquiries, have we been able to catch the faintest rumor of the existence of any other.

We have often wondered in what locality could have existed the original of the extraordinary picture published in Cassel's "Illustrated Bible," and in various religious journals and Bible dictionaries, representing a sheep with a tail of stupendous length, narrow at the root and enlarging toward the end, and formed apparently for the sole purpose of delaying the progress of the animal by dragging in its rear—exposed by its weight to inevitable excoriation and ulceration. To relieve the ill-fated animal from the pain and annoyance of such an incumbrance, it would seem that man has contrived for it a little cart drawn by ribbons (doubtless sky-blue), tied in a

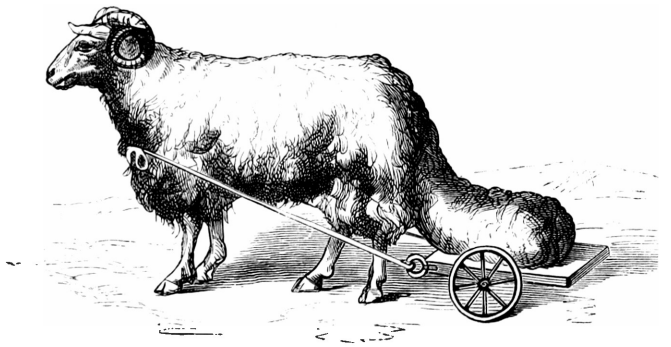


Broad-tailed Sheep, shorn. (Lev. ix., 19.)

pretty bow to a collar around the animal's neck! We had, indeed, occasionally seen a pet sheep kept in the house, and so pampered and overfed that its tail had grown inconveniently heavy; and some member of the family had taken compassion upon it and fastened its tail on one of the little carts which Oriental children use as playthings, and which, with their solid wheels, are tolerable imitations of the common ox-cart of the country. We have specially in mind at this moment four fine sheep belonging to an Armenian gentleman, each of which knew its name perfectly. The largest of these, called *Karageuz*—black-eye—was an uncommonly fine animal: it grew so fat that one of the lobes of its tail dropped off by its own weight; and, following the advice of a shepherd, the owner had a little cart made for it upon which the tail was fastened. A

wealthy Turk offered thirty-five dollars for the animal, desiring to offer it as a sacrifice on account of his son's recovery from sickness, but the owner refused to sell it. The animal was finally killed, and its flesh and fat were sold to the butcher for a hundred dollars. The diminished tail alone weighed forty okes, or one hundred and ten pounds!

But the tails of the sheep we have described differ so entirely in form from Cassel's illustration, that we felt confident our sheep could never have stood for that picture; and we began to wonder whether somebody had not discovered that sheep of Herodotus whose tail, as he avers, was three cubits, or four and a half feet in length, and had to be conveyed in a carriage!

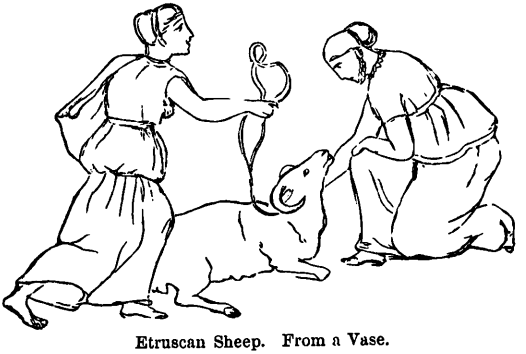


The Broad-tailed Sheep, according to Harris. ("An Eastern Sheep drawing his fatt Tayle in a cart, weighing 40 pounds' weight or more.")

Finally, however, we accidentally came across "John Harris's Voyages and Travels," published in London, 1705, and found in it the original of all these pictures, as may easily be seen from the position of the animal.* But his copyists seem to have known more of the East than he did; they have simplified the harness, and substituted solid wheels instead of the elegant European spokes of Harris's original; they at least knew that a wheel with spokes had not been made in the East in modern times. Looking at the text in Harris's book for an explanation of his picture, we found a description of Abyssinia

* The picture in Cassel's Bible is evidently an unfaithful copy of Harris. One of our best religious weeklies, which never publishes illustrations, took the pains, not long since, to reproduce Cassel's picture in its columns as a faithful portrait of the "Syrian Sheep!"

taken from the lips of "Gregory," a native of that country, by Job Ludolf, in which occurs the following sentence: "They have very large sheep, whose tails weigh ten or twelve and sometimes more than forty pounds, so that the owners are forced to tie a little cart behind them to ease the creature and preserve the wool." This description agrees with our own of the broad-tailed sheep, as will readily be seen by comparing them. The author does not claim that the picture he gives of it was furnished him by Gregory. It would, indeed, be preposterous to suppose that this native Oriental was a draughtsman. Harris doubtless drew it himself from his own imagination, to satisfy the laudable curiosity of his readers. This is further proved by the pictures of monkeys also published by him, some of which are represented as "throwing sand or dust



Etruscan Sheep. From a Vase.

in the eyes of wild beasts* that came to set upon them." Gregory, however, or Job Ludolf, can not altogether be relied upon for the correctness of their statements, for the description goes on to add further the following interesting facts in natural history: "Ivory is not of the teeth of the elephants but of their horns, which grow out of their *head* and not their *jaws*, upon the brow of the males only;" and thereupon Mr. Harris gives us a very lively picture of a troop of elephants *without* horns "upon the brows," but with a single tusk in their mouths instead, tearing away and demolishing a forest of trees, while "a corn-field" is represented as "defended" against their ravages "by a tame she-elephant."†

* Lions.

† Harris, i., 391.

The present habitat or region occupied exclusively by the broad-tailed sheep is quite marked, and appears to have been nearly the same in ancient times, though it may perhaps have extended not quite so far north and west. The cut on the preceding page, copied from an Etruscan vase, represents a sheep with a very small tail, doubtless the same variety as is still prevalent in Europe, and apparently cut, as done by our farmers at the present day.

Rams are not unfrequently met having three, four, and even eight horns. The accompanying sketch represents a specimen that was old, and his horns small; but they are sometimes very large and fine. To an Oriental mind there is nothing unnatural or improbable in the prophet Daniel's beast, "which had ten horns,"* or the "Lamb having seven horns," seen by the apostle John.†



Four-horned Ram.

The utility of the sheep to Oriental nations is probably greater than to any other people, and is unsurpassed by that of any other animal. Its flesh is almost the only meat eaten in Western Asia, and is decidedly superior to the mutton of Europe. Its tallow, mixed with that of the goat, is exclusively employed for lighting purposes in all regions where the olive does not flourish, except in the rural districts, where pitch-pine is used instead by the humble villagers. We have already spoken of the uses of the tail-fat, or rump, which is sold in the market-places, packed in bags of skin. The milk of the sheep is richer than that of the goat, and the "leben," or curdled milk made of it, is preferred to any other. It is, however, mostly converted into white cheese, which everywhere finds a ready market; sweet curds are also made of it, and the shepherd's family is considered as living upon the fat of the land, especially if he can occasionally bring home a little honey, for he often has a hive in the forest, or some secluded dale not far from his sheep-walks.

But this animal is especially useful to man by furnishing him the best material for his clothing. Before the introduction of the cotton fabrics of Europe, the garments of the entire pop-

* Dan. vii., 7. † Rev. v., 6.

ulation were made of wool, of silk, and occasionally of linen, with the exception of a coarse cotton cloth manufactured in the country and worn by the poorer classes; but wool and linen alone were known to the Israelites.* Wool is also extensively manufactured into carpets, the finest of which are made at Ooshak, in Asia Minor.† Smaller kinds are woven by the wandering nomads, and brought to the city markets for sale. It is an old custom among these that every girl weave with her own hand a *sejadeh*, or praying carpet, into the centre of which she works some of her own hair; this she sends as a present to her betrothed, who is then supposed to learn for the first time the color of her hair.

The trappings also of horses, asses, and camels, as well as the saddle-bags, which in the East take the place of the trunks and valises of the Western world, are made of wool; and it is worthy of notice that the figures and patterns of all these manufactures are quaint and peculiar, and after a fixed model, bearing a resemblance to flowers and leaves. We entertain no doubt of their great antiquity, which may be asserted of all the ornamental arts, and also applies to the trades and business of the East.

The goat is often mentioned in the Scriptures, and occupies as important a part in the life of modern Oriental nations as it did in that of the ancients. The wild goat exists at the present day on all the high and rocky mountains of Western Asia from Circassia to Arabia, though he has been pursued by the hunter from time immemorial. Moses mentions him in the list of the animals which the Israelites were permitted to eat.‡ This wild goat is the *paseng*, which closely resembles the tame goat of the mountain districts in every particular, save in his long and powerful horns, knobbed upon their upper surface. The hunters assert that when hard-pressed, this creature escapes by throwing himself down a precipice and falling upon his horns, whose knotted edge enables him again to recover his footing among the rocks.

These animals are of a fawn color, shading off into dark red. They climb the steepest acclivities with amazing speed, leap

* Ezek. xxxiv., 3; Hos. ii., 9.

† See "Travels in Asia Minor," ii., 258.

‡ Deut. xiv., 5.

ing from rock to rock with admirable agility, and balancing themselves most unconcernedly along stupendous precipices.* Their habits also much resemble those of the tame goat. When they go forth to feed in the morning, the strongest males lead the way over the rocks and chasms, and the whole flock follow in single file. The hunters take advantage of this habit, and, secreting themselves, shoot several in succession, the fall of their companions not deterring the rest from pursuing the same path. When the winter is very severe, they sometimes take refuge among the tame goats, and are thus secured by the shepherd, but if allowed to accompany the flock to the pasture, they are sure to take to the mountains again when the weather moderates. The latest naturalists consider the original of the tame goat to be the wild goat we have described; but the varieties of the domestic goat are very numerous in Western Asia, and inferior only to those of the dog. The difference consists in variations of form, size, color, quality of the hair, and even in the temper and habits of the animal. The Aleppo goat has excessively long, pendant ears, while the Egyptian is slender in his form, and commonly marked with two hairy wattles hanging at the top of the throat. The "Teftik" goat is peculiar to a region which extends about five days' journey southward from the ancient Ancyra (now Angora), and mostly consists of an elevated plain, or plateau, cultivated only on the margins of its rivers. It is called the Angora goat by Europeans, from the town in Galatia, which is the mart for the exportation to Europe of its valuable, soft,

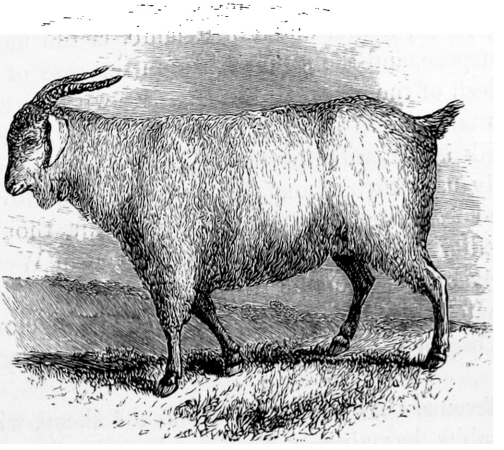


The Paseng, or Wild Goat of Western Asia.

* Psa. civ., 18.

silky hair, employed chiefly in the manufacture of shawls, and surpassed only by that of the Thibet goat, of which the well-known Cashmere shawls are made.

The Teftik goat is a small animal, delicate, and closely resembling in its habits the sheep with which it is always kept. Its color is uniformly white, and its glossy hair very long and wavy; the little kids particularly are beautiful after a shower, being covered with soft, shining curls.* As it seems to have been unknown in Asia Minor before the Turkish invasion, it



The Teftik, or Angora Goat.

is generally supposed that it was introduced from the region of Cashmere by some of the Turkmen tribes. There appears to have been a breed of goats very highly esteemed in ancient times, in the district of Bashan, the modern Hauran,† but it is impossible to say what were its peculiarities. All attempts to produce the Angora goat in other parts of Western Asia have heretofore been unsuccessful, yet the goats of the district of Konia (the ancient Iconium) bear a near resemblance to the Angora, though the quality of their hair is decidedly inferior.

There are probably more goats than sheep kept throughout Western Asia. The Bedawin of the desert keep more of the former, probably because they can better endure their roving

* See "Travels in little-known Parts of Asia Minor," vol. ii., p. 209.

† Deut. xxxii., 14.

habits; so it is likewise with the inhabitants of the mountain districts throughout the entire country. These statements correspond with what we learn from the Scriptures respecting the vast numbers of goats kept by the ancient inhabitants of the same lands. Nabal had a thousand goats feeding on Carmel;* the Arabians (ancestors of the Bedawin) brought tribute to King Jehoshaphat seven thousand seven hundred he-goats.† The keeping of goats appears to have been one of the chief occupations of this people.‡ It is worthy of notice that in nearly every description of a hospitable entertainment provided for a passing guest, a kid, and not a lamb, is the animal killed for the purpose, and the same is true in the case of a present.§ Yet the flesh of the goat will not compare with mutton, though the kid is tender and delicate, especially when boiled in milk.‖ Goats' milk is generally preferred to any other, and is almost exclusively used throughout the East.¶ It is also made into cheese and *leben*, or sour milk. Goats hair, though of less general utility than wool, is much employed in Western Asia, particularly by the nomadic tribes; their black tents are made of this material,** and so are coarse kinds of cloth used as carpeting, bagging, "sackcloth," and even as garments for the poor.††

The difference between the goat and the sheep, with respect to their habits, has already been explained. The life of the goat-herd is in many respects less arduous, and fraught with fewer dangers, than that of the shepherd. This is owing to the temper of the goat, which is more intelligent, more courageous, and not so helpless as the sheep. It will not allow an enemy to triumph without a trial of strength. Moreover, the goat does not suffer from the heat, its haunts being on the mountain-side, where the fresh breezes blow. There is no need of feeding goats in the night-time, and so they can safely be protected within a fold. This consists of a wall of uncemented stones, or more frequently of a strong hedge made of thorny bushes, twisted between strong posts driven firmly into the

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* 1 Sam. xxv., 2.
† 2 Chron. xvii., 11.
‡ 1 Chron. xxvii., 31; Ezek. xxvii., 21.
§ Gen. xxxviii., 17; Judg. vi., 19; xv., 1; 1 Sam. vi., 20; Luke xv., 29.
‖ Exod. xxiii., 19.
¶ Prov. xxvii., 27.
** Exod. xxvi., 7; Cant. i., 5.
†† 1 Sam. xix., 13, 16.

ground. These folds are built in a mountain valley, or on the outskirts of a village; in the latter case they are connected with flat-roofed mud-houses, inside which the goats are stabled in winter. Even at that season of the year, however, they are not wholly kept in the fold, for as soon as the weather clears the goat-herd may be seen leading out his flock, and tracing a path for them through the snow to some cluster of bushes or trees not far off, where they may crop the evergreen leaves or nibble the bark. It is worthy of note that this most useful animal endures equally well the severest cold of the highest mountain ridges and the burning heat of the desert. The favorite places, however, for folding the goats are the natural caves, which abound in all the calcareous regions of Western Asia; and not only these, but the sepulchres of the ancients, as well as the ruins of antiquity, are appropriated by the goat-herds for the folding of their flocks. An inclosure of stones is made in front of a cave, so that both the goats and their master can remain in the open air in fine weather, while the deeper recesses afford them a shelter to which they may retreat from the rains and storms of winter. There every evening you may see a bright fire lighted and shadows moving about. Should you ask for hospitality, it would be readily granted, with a share of the frugal meal. Early in the morning the place is wholly deserted. The traveler, when he visits the tombs of the kings of Seleucia, the church of Tortosa, the ruins of Baalbec or Palmyra, sees tangible proofs that the habitations of the great and powerful of the earth have become an abiding-place of flocks.* In the early morning the goat-herd leads his flock to the pasture; but when they go forth along a well-known path, an old he-goat with tinkling bell takes his place,† whose majestic bearing is particularly noticed by King Solomon.‡ They move to the adjacent hills, covered with trees or shrubs, and aromatic herbs, the delicate shoots and flowers of which they crop with the greatest avidity. They boldly clamber upon the steepest rocks in all directions, seeming to vie with each other in displaying their address and sure-footedness. The goat-herd and his dog must be constantly on the

* Isa. xvii., 2; xxxii., 14; Ezek. xxv., 5. † Jer. l., 8.
‡ Prov. xxx., 29, 31.

watch to prevent them from scattering too much as they feed, though a well-trained flock will obey their master's voice with tolerable promptness and unanimity. Goats are liable to be attacked by the same enemies as sheep; but as they are out only during the day, it is easier to protect them; they are, besides, more nimble in their movements. You may see them coming down the hills a little before sunset, advancing more and more rapidly as they approach, for they are expecting to meet their young. The little kids are active from their birth, but are not allowed for several months to follow the flock, both to spare their strength and to secure their mothers' milk. They are given in charge to the little boys and girls, who lead them a short distance off, or suffer them to feed among the tents of the encampments.* When, toward evening, the flock is seen coming home from the mountain, the kids are all shut up in one of the folds, and there is a general bleating of the mothers and the little ones, who are impatient to meet each other. The former are now all driven into another inclosure, across the door of which the shepherds sit down, side by side, in a row, with their backs to the fold. Each one is provided with a vessel or dish of some kind: the kids are then let out of their own fold, and there is a general rush of their dams to get to them by dashing through between the shepherds. Their speed is further increased by a little boy within the inclosure, who drives them toward the door of the fold. The shepherds make room from time to time for a goat to pass out, when, catching it by the hind leg as it dashes past, they detain it long enough for the milking. We have often wondered how the shepherds could so easily and expeditiously manage two or three hundred goats, some of which they milk dry, others only partially, while others, again, are suffered to pass through unimpeded, according to the condition of each.

The use of goats' milk by the ancients as an article of food is attested by the Greek and Roman writers, and is proved by the pictures on the monuments. The cut on the following page is a copy of a gem published by Rawlinson. Reference to this custom will also be found in Prov. xxvii., 27.

When sheep and goats are fed together in the same pasture,

* 1 Kings. xx., 27; Cant. i., 8.



Milking a Goat. From a Babylonish Gem. (Prov. xxvii., 27.)

the shepherd often has occasion to separate them, especially as the goats are apt to be troublesome to the sheep when folded in the same inclosure, on account of their butting propensities and general restlessness; hence it is a very common sight to see a shepherd "dividing his sheep from the goats."* It is done with the crook, by striking the goats either on their bodies or their horns, and thus driving them off by themselves, while the quiet sheep remain in their places. The comparison of the righteous and the wicked to these two classes of animals has a foundation in their respective tempers and characteristic traits, and to an Oriental mind is extremely graphic and appropriate. The goat is constantly compared, by the inhabitants of Eastern lands, to the Evil One.

* Matt. xxv., 32.

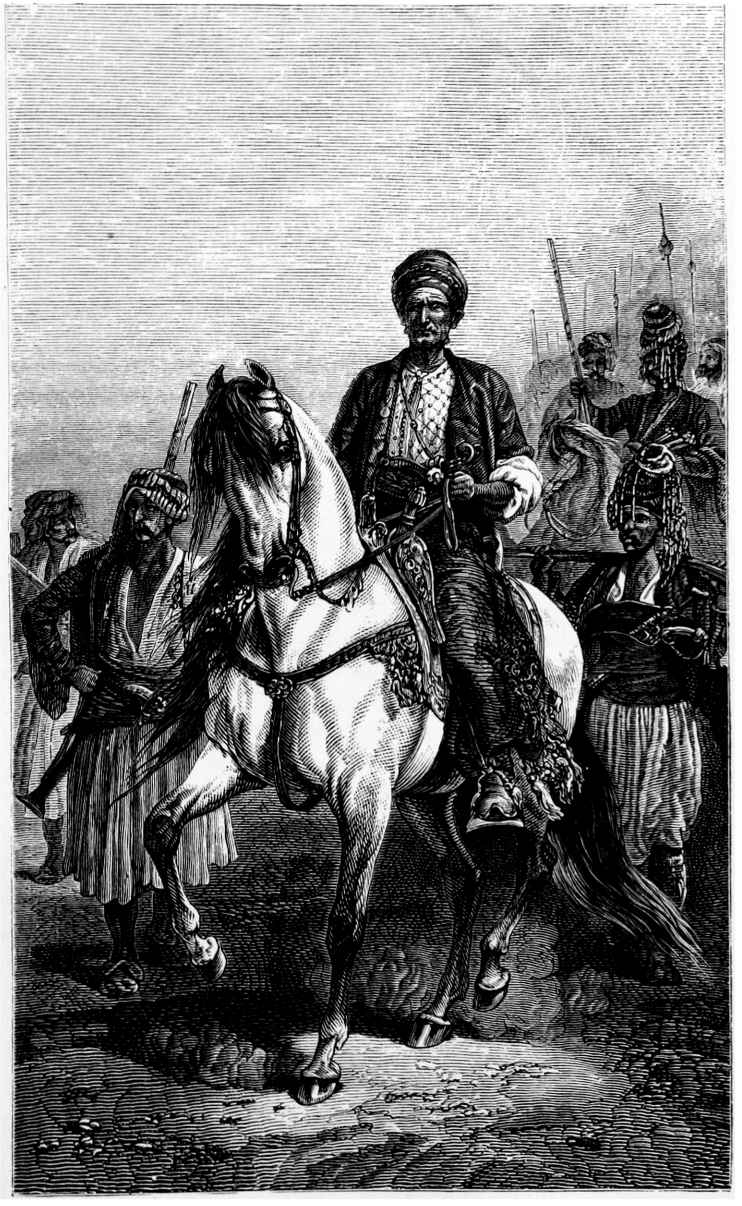
CHAPTER VIII.

THE HORSE, THE MULE, THE ASS, AND THE CAMEL.

It is a singular fact that the chariot or carriage drawn by horses, so often mentioned by ancient writers, both sacred and profane, has entirely disappeared from Western Asia and Africa, though it has now become so common in the once barbarous Europe, and in the new continent of America. The only wheeled vehicles now used in Bible lands are of foreign manufacture, and of recent importation. The natives make and employ only the rude, heavy cart, with solid wheels, drawn by oxen or buffaloes, already described page 80; yet the chariot seems to have originated in the plains of Mesopotamia, and was gradually brought into use in Syria, Canaan, and Egypt. In the last of these countries the horse does not appear on the monuments before the eighteenth dynasty,* after which period he is often met with. So that this valuable animal had not long been known in Egypt at the time that Jacob removed thither with his household. When Joseph was proclaimed "grand vizier" of that country, he was made to ride in the second chariot of King Pharaoh.† He himself also sent either two or four wheeled "wagons" to bring his aged father, with the little ones, and the wives of his brethren, to the land of their adoption, and "made ready his chariot and went up to meet them."‡ Such "wagons" drawn by mules are represented on the monuments of Egypt. When the patriarch died, Joseph conveyed his body to the land of Canaan, accompanied by "chariots and horsemen, and a very great company."§

The chariots of Egypt were not employed for purposes of conveyance alone; for when the Israelites had been reluctantly permitted to depart for Mount Sinai, and seemed to be entangled in the land and shut in by the wilderness, Pharaoh pur-

* Wilkinson, i., 386, B.C. 1530.
† Gen. xli., 43.
‡ Gen. xlv., 19-21; xlvi., 29.
§ Gen. l., 9.



The modern Arab Horse. (Job xxxiv., 19.)

sued after them with his six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt.* The "chariots of iron" possessed by "the inhabitants of the valley," which for a time successfully withstood the arms of Israel's hosts under Joshua, were in all probability similar to those long in use among other nations, being armed with scythe-like blades, firmly fixed in the axles.†

In the time of Saul, the Philistines were able to bring thirty thousand chariots and six thousand horsemen against the Israelites in the level country.‡ The Syrians gathered together thirty-two thousand chariots, in the hope of being able to prevail against King David.§

To these engines of war, both chariots and cavalry, God allowed the Israelites to oppose "footmen" alone; for they, and their kings in particular, were prohibited from "multiplying horses to themselves."‖ The object of this prohibition was to prevent the people from having relations with Egypt, and thus relapsing into idolatry, which very thing occurred in the days of Solomon.¶ It was, moreover, the divine purpose to isolate the Israelites from all their idolatrous neighbors, to maintain the liberal institutions established by Joshua, and to prevent the formation of a standing army, which would at once destroy their own liberty and foster the love of foreign conquest; for it is worthy of note that the standing armies of ancient times mainly consisted of chariots and cavalry, the foot-soldiers being, as now, a sort of militia, drafted from the common people only on occasion of a warlike expedition. King David was the first of the Hebrews to adopt the chariot as an instrument of warfare,** and King Solomon, in accordance, doubtless, with an already established custom, still extant throughout the East, by which cities and provinces are made responsible for specific armaments in war, imposed on certain cities the duty of holding fourteen hundred war-chariots in readiness against his call.†† During this reign chariots and horses were imported from Egypt, both for the use of the Hebrews, "and for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria." The price of a

* Exod. xiv., 3–7.
† Josh. xvii., 16, 18; Judg. i., 19.
‡ 1 Sam. xiii., 5.
§ 1 Chron. xix., 7.
‖ Deut. xvii., 16.
¶ 1 Kings x., 28, 29; xi., 7–10.
** 2 Sam. viii., 4.
†† 1 Kings ix., 19; x., 25.

chariot with a span of horses, and an extra one (according to the custom of that day), was six hundred shekels, or one hundred and fifty for each of the three horses, and the same for the chariot.* This is equivalent to about £18 10*s.*, or $93 per horse; a high price, compared with modern times, especially if we consider that money was worth three or four times as much then as at present.

From the time of David and Solomon the Hebrews employed these engines of war in common with their enemies, the Assyrians and Babylonians, the pictorial representations of whose horses and chariots have been so remarkably preserved in the monuments of Nimrood and Koyoonjik throughout Western Asia.†

How shall we account for the total disappearance of the war-chariot and the convenient carriage, once so common in these lands? Civilization has moved westward and northward, and has been utterly crushed and destroyed in Western Asia by the barbarous tribes which have issued forth from the Arabian peninsula and the great plains of Tartary. They have ruined the palace and the temple, have gorged themselves with the accumulated treasures of centuries of prosperity, and have settled down into the barbarism whence they originated, adopting such of the customs and comforts of civilization as happened to suit their fancy.‡

The word "carriage," both in the singular and in the plural, is sometimes employed in a peculiar sense in our English version of the Bible. It means whatever is *carried* by a traveler, *i. e.*, baggage, as is evident from the context of some of the passages in which it occurs. Thus, in Judg. xviii., 20, 21, the word *carriage* evidently refers to the baggage of the Danites; 1 Sam. xvii., 22, also contains the word, evidently referring to the presents brought by young David from his father Jesse for his elder brothers and their captain; while in Acts xxi., 15, we find the same mode of expression which is used at the present day in speaking of loading beasts of burden with the baggage, when starting on a journey: "We took up our carriages," *i. e.*, our baggage—the very language still in use.

It is impossible to ascertain in what country originated the

* 1 Kings x., 29. † Acts viii., 28. ‡ Mic. v., 10; Zech. ix., 10.

noble and useful animal which has now become naturalized in all portions of the habitable globe.* We have already mentioned that the horse does not appear to have existed in Egypt before the definite historic period, nor would it seem that he was employed by man in the neighboring countries during prehistoric times; for the monument of Euyuk, and other remains in Asia Minor and Syria, generally attributed to the Egyptians under Sesostris, contain no figure of a horse, though they represent cattle and goats. The earliest mention of this animal in any historic record is found in the Scriptural account of Joseph's elevation to power in Egypt.† As no ancient author, sacred or profane, makes any mention of the horse in his wild state, it would appear that this noble animal originated near the cradle of the human race and within narrowly circumscribed limits, and that he was early brought into a state of domesticity. He is now found wild, or partly so, in the plains of Tartary, in North and South America, and on such of the deltas of Asia Minor as are covered with forests and almost inaccessible swamps; and we know that in each of these instances the wild horse originated from the domestic stock.

There is perhaps no part of the world in which horses are more numerous, and useful to all classes of the population, than in Western Asia. Though evidently intended by nature to live on the plain, the horse now seems quite at home climbing the steepest mountain declivities, whether bearing heavy goods, or carrying the traveler or the warrior. The common horse is an extremely hardy animal, usually worked to the utmost limit of his strength, and scantily fed on straw and barley. This animal, with the mule and the ass, does most of the burden-bearing of the country, the heaviest loads being conveyed on camels and buffalo-carts; but though sturdy, and most useful, it is much neglected, and does not receive the attention it deserves. The finer races of horses, however, are thoroughly appreciated, and well cared for. They are chiefly used for purposes of warfare, whether in predatory expeditions or the cavalry service; and it is in such circumstances that the most remarkable qualities of the animal are best displayed. The description of the war-horse contained in the book of Job is the

* Bruce, v., 284.

† Gen. xli., 43.

finest ever written, as applicable to the war-horse of Western Asia and North Africa. "Hast thou given the horse strength?" No one can look upon the Arabian thorough-bred, whose diaphanous skin and coat of silken hair reveal the form of every muscle and vein of his body — no one who has witnessed his lightning speed, seen him leap like a gazelle, or suddenly stop in the midst of his career, can fail to pronounce him the image of strength and power. "Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?" a true picture of the horse's mane floating in the breeze, while he champs the bit and neighs, impatient of restraint. "Canst thou make him *afraid*," when he bounds "as a grasshopper?" "He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength," admirably represents the impatience of the war-horse as he sees the valley spread out before him, and pants to display his strength and agility. "He goeth on to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword." "The quiver" (quiverful of arrows) "rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet. He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha! and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting."

It is a well-known fact that, though horses unaccustomed to the sight of elephants and camels have fled before these animals when they first saw them, yet they have speedily overcome this natural fear; and the common cavalry-horse has been so greatly excited by the sound of war that he has repeatedly been known, when losing his rider, to dash without him upon the enemy, and to fight on alone.

There are other beautiful passages also in the poetic writings of the Bible as applicable to the modern war-horse of Turkey as Job xxxix., 19–25. Such are, for instance, Psa. cxlvii., 10; Prov. xxi., 31; Jer. iv., 13; viii., 6; and Hab. i., 8.

It is worthy of note that, as the modern horse is chiefly prized in connection with warfare and predatory expeditions, so also the Bible refers to the noble animal almost wholly in a similar sense; and as it was in ancient times, so at the present day different portions of the country are celebrated for the peculiar qualities of their breeds of horses. The Circassians are noted for the skill with which they manage their small mountain



Koordish and Koordish Cavalry.

horse, and the Russian troops have often had occasion to admire the quality of their steeds. They indeed employ the evolutions of their horses as a system of telegraphy, by which they are able to communicate to the mountaineers beyond the reach of their voices the orders of their chiefs, or the movements of their enemies. We have known one of their chieftains to shoot a crow on the wing with his rifle, while galloping at full speed.

The Cappadocian and Galatian horses are the most highly esteemed of the peninsula, and were equally so under the Roman dominion. But the Koordish is the most hardy, and best able to endure the rough usage of the lawless mountaineers, who, under the name of Koords, are the terror of the populations occupying the country from Cæsarea to Ooroomia, and from Trebizond to Aleppo. These men are celebrated for their equestrian skill; and whenever they appear at any of those tournaments called "the jerid," of which the indolent Turks are fast abandoning the practice, and which occur on occasions of special festivities and at annual fairs, they are almost sure to win the honors of the day. It is truly marvelous to see the facility with which the Koordish horse obeys the slightest wish of his master, suddenly darting forward at full speed, stopping instantly in his career, wheeling to the right or the left, until he is white with foam, his mouth bleeding, and his flanks lacerated by the heavy stirrups, while the brawny arm of his expert rider hurls the blunt javelin with astonishing force and unerring aim, and he leans forward almost out of sight to the right or left of the horse, in order to avoid the weapon of his antagonist. The Koordish robber is armed, like the ancients, with a shield, javelin, sword, and a long spear ornamented with a tuft of wool.

The Koordish horse has made his rider from time immemorial the undisputed master of Koordistan, and the terror of all the neighboring countries. The Koords are probably the descendants of the fierce Carducians, who impeded the retreat of the ten thousand Greeks under the leadership of Xenophon, from the plains of Mesopotamia to Trebizond, on the Black Sea. It will also be noticed that the country they occupy is a portion of what has, from time immemorial, been called Armenia, a land celebrated for its horses. Strabo says that it pro-

duced great quantities of horses, which were as highly esteemed as those of the celebrated Nesæan breed.* The Koords are the people referred to under the name of Togarmah, the common ancestor of that nation and of the Armenians.† Since those days, the Koords have left their mark on the pages of history, alternately as highway robbers and as soldiers of fortune—ever ready to offer their swords to the highest bidder. They have thus played a conspicuous part in the history of Asia Minor, Syria, and Palestine. In Egypt the Koordish cavalry was the right arm of the Fatimite caliphs, after whose downfall some of its most fortunate chiefs even occupied the throne.

The Persian horse is also highly esteemed in the East, and there are no better horsemen anywhere than the Persians of the present day. The word *soos* in the Hebrew Scripture is generally supposed to designate a carriage-horse, and some critics have claimed that the word must have been derived from Susa,‡ capital of the kingdom of Elam, a portion of the present territory of Persia, lying to the south-east of Babylon. This etymology is liable to serious objections. Susa could more easily be derived from *soos* than the latter from the former; it is, however, probable that the two words have no connection with each other. But the Hebrew name for a saddle-horse is *parash* (*faras* in Arabic), supposed by many to be derived from Pares (Persia). Should this etymology be correct, it would indicate that the first horses the Hebrews saw had come from Persia. This may have been at the time that Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, and the kings under his command, made an incursion into the land of Canaan, and were overthrown by Abraham and his servants.§ This is further confirmed by the fact that large numbers of horses were anciently reared in that portion of Persia which was called Media, now Azerbijan, and, according to Polybius, x., 27, § 2, were thence "sent to all parts of Asia." Their great superiority to the Greek horses was fully proved during Xerxes's invasion of Greece.‖ Diodorus Siculus states that the great horse-pastures near Bagistun nourished one hundred thousand horses, and that Media paid

* "Geography," bk. xi., chap. xiv., § 9.
† Gen. x., 3; Ezek. xxvii., 14.
‡ Or Shushan (Esth. iii., 15).
§ Gen. xiv., 1-16.
‖ Gillies's "Ancient Greece," p. 233.

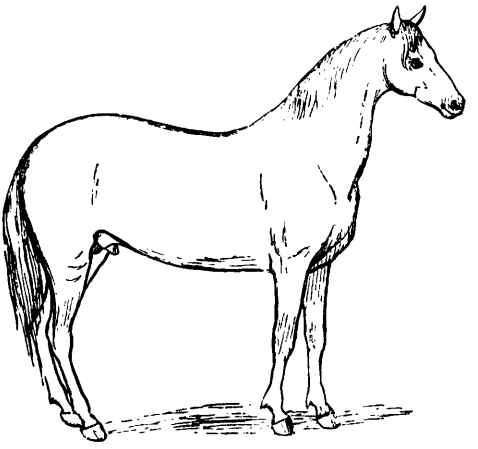
to the King of Persia a tribute of three thousand horses a year. However this may be, excellent horses now abound in the level tracts of Persia, and are particularly remarkable for their great powers of endurance. Some of them have repeatedly been known to travel under the saddle nearly two hundred miles in three consecutive days.* These animals are there raised in large numbers by the nomadic tribes who rule the country, numbering from seven hundred thousand to eight hundred thousand souls, whose cavalry forms the flower of the Persian army. The Shah himself belongs to a family of these nomads.

In ancient times it is supposed that the finest horses came from Persia, from a district called Nesæa by the Greek writers. There is a fine picture of a horse still preserved among the sculptures of Persepolis, which we reproduce on the following page, for the purpose of comparing it with the most highly esteemed modern horses, and particularly with the sketch of an Arab horse on the same page. The latter was drawn from a fine specimen, and brings out to view some of the characteristics of the breed. The comparison of the two would seem to indicate that the Persepolitan horse is a pure Arab; for they both have the tail set very low, and the mouth small, and the forehead well developed about the eyes. They are also tall in the hind-quarters. The sculptures of the ancients represent several of the paces of the horse, such as the trot, the canter, the leap, etc.; but this Persepolitan work is the only one we remember which represents the *amble*, a favorite pace in the East; and he is formed after the most approved model for that movement, *i. e.*, thick-set. Again, the mode of tying up the tail is prevalent among the moderns, who always do it to a valuable animal; and the same may be said of the bell around the neck, which is referred to in Zech. xiv., 20.

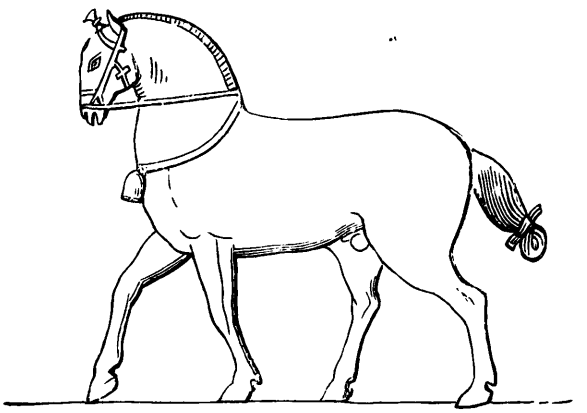
It has already been stated that the horse was introduced into Egypt from some foreign country, most probably by the shepherd-kings, whose successful invasion occurred just before the time of Joseph, and whose dominion extended over several centuries. But though of foreign origin, this animal could not fail to succeed in a land to which he was so well adapted, and

* Morier, ii., 359.

whose proverbial fertility offered him the best sustenance. The chariots of Egypt, and its numerous and effective cavalry, were the dread of the Israelites.* The Pharaohs, however, until the defeat of Pharaoh-necho by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish,



The Modern Arab Horse.



Sculptured Horse at Persepolis. (Zech. xiv., 20.)

usually pursued a friendly policy toward the Hebrews, and the latter were much inclined to seek their alliance, and the aid of their military power. Since the commencement of the Chris-

* Exod. xiv., 9; 2 Chron. xii., 2–4; 2 Chron. xxxv., 20–24; comp. Jer. xlvi., 2–4.

tian era, and particularly since the appearance of Mohammed, the cavalry of Egypt has always been celebrated for its valor and dash in the battle-fields of the Saracenic warriors, from the plains of Persia to those of Spain. It has ever constituted the principal force of the Egyptian monarchs, but acquired its greatest fame under the noted name of the "Mamelukes," who were mostly Circassian slaves, purchased by the successive governors of Egypt, with whom they shared its wealth and emoluments. It is unnecessary to describe "the Battle of the Pyramids," where they were conquered by the tactics of modern discipline and military science. They were revived again after the flight of Bonaparte, and maintained their power until Mohammed Ali put a final end to their existence. This wily ruler, being determined to share with no one the ownership and plunder of the "garden of the earth," invited the whole body of the Mamelukes, under some attractive pretense, to meet in the Castle of Cairo. They accepted the invitation, and when all had assembled within the ample area, the gates were closed, and the newly disciplined troops of Mohammed Ali were led in, and ordered to shoot down the unsuspecting beys and their numerous retainers. They were all butchered without mercy, one alone escaping, saved by the intelligence of his noble horse, which climbed the battlements and leaped down the high wall, losing his own life, but saving his master. This was the last of the Mamelukes, and he was alive at Constantinople some twenty years ago.

The finest race of horses is universally acknowledged to be the Arabian. This is probably owing, not so much to the climate, as to the early training and peculiar use of this animal by the Arabs of the desert. The young colt has free admittance to his master's tent, and is treated like one of the family. The Arab is as careful to preserve the pedigree of his horse, as the Jews were that of their tribes, and the documents which he hoards in proof are written and sealed by sheikhs of the highest authority. The colt is the playmate of the children until old enough to carry them on its back, when it is ridden without saddle or bridle, and guided by the mere voice or hand of its master. Every Arab is ambitious of acquiring ownership in a blood-mare; it often happens that several persons are part owners of a single animal, and may thus become sole possessors

of the progeny for a small sum. The cost of keeping is insignificant, for the horses eat grass during all the year, unless they are fed on barley and straw which has been stolen in a foray.

Every tribe of the Arabian peninsula possesses horses of valuable breeds, but that of the Nejd is most highly esteemed; and particularly a breed which is characterized by prominence of the forehead between the eyes, and noted for its remarkable intelligence. Nothing will induce the Arabs to part with their best mares; not only because they desire to preserve the breed, but from the fact that, in their frequent marauding expeditions by night, they can rely upon their silence, to say nothing of their superior intelligence. The Arabs often relate the story of an Englishman, who, being determined to acquire the most highly esteemed mare in the whole peninsula, was led by his inquiries to the tent of a man clothed in rags. The unanimous verdict of all the Arabians had declared him to be the owner of the finest mare in existence. The Englishman vainly offered fabulous sums of money for the beautiful creature, when the Arab, to put an end to the interview, declared that he would not part with her even if he brought to his tent ten camel-loads of gold sequins. When Mohammed Ali conquered the Wahabies, he offered £1800 to £2000 ($10,000) to Arabs of the desert for single mares, but their owners utterly refused to part with them; yet the price of an ordinary blood-mare is £60, or $300. We have repeatedly asked these people what made them prize their horses so highly, and they uniformly answered, "A fleet and intelligent horse is every thing to us. He who possesses the best is king of the desert. If your enemy is mounted on a fleeter horse than yourself, of what use is untold wealth to you? Your life and property are in his hands. With such a horse caravans are arrested and brought to your tent," etc.* The gun is almost unknown in the desert, and success depends upon the speed of the horse, his power of endurance, and the skillful management of the long, tufted spear, the sword, and the shield, which are still the trusty weapons of the lawless Ishmaelites; and these qualities are possessed by the Arab horse to a degree unsurpassed by any other. The Persians, who are the best riders in the world, as of old, as

* Job i., 17.

members of the Parthian empire, esteem the pure Nejd (Arab) as superior to all others, and detect him by the following rule: He must be made to travel fast over ninety miles at one stretch, then dashed into a stream up to his breast, and fed immediately with barley; if he eats it with a good appetite, he is all that can be desired.*

There is no end of the anecdotes related among the Arabs and by their neighbors, to illustrate the sagacity of this remarkable animal and his devotion to his master. A friend once told us that, in a town of Northern Syria, the pasha, while entertaining an Arab chieftain, expressed doubt as to the superior qualities of the mare he rode; the Arab challenged twenty of the pasha's best horsemen to lay hold of him within the limits of the public meïdan, or square. They attempted it, and failed.

The following seems to be well accredited: An Arab, having been captured by a predatory party, was at night-fall thrown upon the ground, with his hands firmly tied behind his back. His captors laid themselves down around him, and were soon sound asleep. His mare had been tied near by: about the middle of the night she tore her fastenings, stole up to her master, and, lifting him up with her teeth, succeeded in seating him on her back; she then darted off, and fled home with such speed and perseverance, that she died of exhaustion soon after safely depositing her master in his tent.

The Druses of Mount Lebanon and the Hauran possess a breed of the Arab horse distinguished for its superior strength and power of endurance, doubtless acquired among the rugged mountains of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon. The sheikhs, moreover, and the Druse nobles are so constantly in the saddle, and so devoted to the manly game of the jerid, that they may well be reckoned among the best riders in the world. The residence, or palace, of every sheikh or noted chieftain has a level space, or meïdan, in front of it, some eighty yards by forty, which is devoted to this exercise. Here, on festive occasions, guests arrive mounted on their finest steeds, dressed in the gayest costumes, and each armed with several blunt javelins or stout sticks about an inch in diameter, and a yard and a half in length, rounded at both ends; this is the jerid. Soon they may

* Chardin, v., 175.

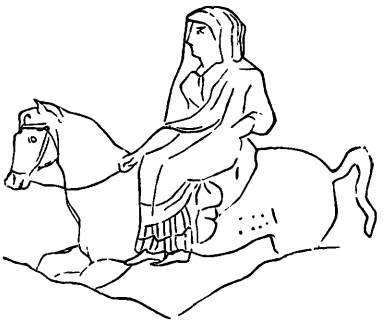
be seen trying the paces of their horses, backward and forward. The riders then divide into two equal parties of a dozen at most, which stand opposed to each other at either extremity of the meïdan. The animals paw the ground, and display the greatest impatience to begin the sport, for their blood is up. A horseman from one of the parties now advances at a sharp canter, slightly reclining back in the saddle, the right arm extended and drawn down to a little below the level of the waist, with the jerid well balanced in the hand, which grasps it by the middle, the clasped fingers being uppermost. After traversing two-thirds of the meïdan, he suddenly turns, wheels his horse round to the left without sensibly checking his speed, and delivers his jerid with full force among the horsemen opposed to him. The weapon, thus obtaining impulse not only from the muscular strength of the rider's arm, but from the impetus of the animal in the sweeping course which it is made to perform, parts like a stone from a sling. The moment the horseman has delivered his jerid, he puts his horse into full gallop to return to his own side, pursued by one of the opposing party, who darts out after him, and, choosing his time and distance, hurls his jerid at his back. The former either avoids the blow by stooping down in his saddle, or, if expert enough, parries, and sometimes catches, his adversary's weapon in his left hand. In this manner the whole, who take part in the meïdan, are successively engaged until the *mêlée* becomes general, constant, and exciting. Footmen are present, who pick up and supply the riders with the jerids. Severe and indeed injurious blows are sometimes exchanged. The Druse sheiks will often get so ruffled in temper as to throw away the jerid, draw their swords, and begin to fight with each other in downright earnest; and it is only the prompt interposition of the by-standers which on such occasions prevents bloodshed.

Each game, or meïdan, as it is called, lasts from two to three hours, at the expiration of which time both riders and horses are ready to drop from exhaustion.

The Mamelukes of Egypt were also celebrated for their skill in these manly games; yet it is related that the Druse sheikh Ali Amad, esteemed in his day the best horseman in Syria, was once present at a meïdan performed in Cairo before the viceroy, Mohammed Ali Pasha, where the pasha's favorite black

eunuch was the terror of all combatants, from the skillful and merciless manner in which he handled his jerid. The pasha taunted Ali Amad with his reputation as a first-rate horseman, and challenged him to enter the lists with his eunuch. The sheikh at once accepted the defiance, but first obtained the pasha's solemn assurance that he should not be held responsible for any consequences that might ensue. After one or two passes, the sheikh parried the eunuch's well-delivered weapon, pursued him in his retreat, and drove his jerid (which, however, it must be observed, he had privately pointed) with such force that it entered the eunuch's back between the shoulders and came out at his breast. Mohammed Ali, faithful to his word, took not the least notice of the fatal occurrence.* This incident may serve to illustrate the power of the javelin and the spear in the hands of the ancients.†

Western travelers in the East often notice the fact that the women never ride sideways, as with us, but astride like the men. It has generally been supposed that the custom now prevailing among ourselves dates back only to the Middle Ages, or even later. But this appears to be a mistake; for there are several representations of women riding sideways upon Etruscan vases older than the founding of Rome (B.C. 752), showing that the custom prevailed in Italy in those early days. One of these pictures is here given, on account of the singularity of the fact. We also reproduce on the following page a picture of two Assyrian women riding astride upon a mule. The former may now be seen in the museum of Naples,‡ and the latter is taken from Rawlinson.§



Woman riding sideways. From a Vase found at Ruvo, in Italy.

The trappings of the horses appear scarcely to have changed in any respect from the earliest times to the present, if we may

* Churchill's "Mount Lebanon," vol. ii., p. 282.

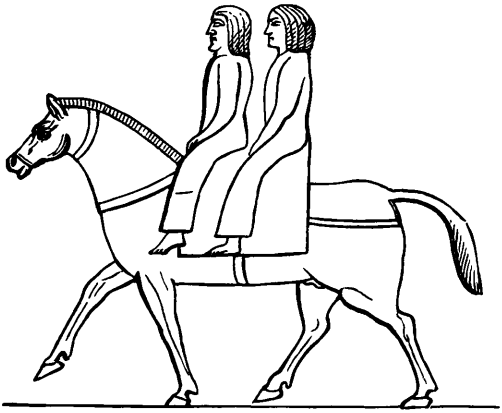
† 2 Sam. ii., 23; 1 Chron. xi., 20.

‡ Gargiulo's Collection, iv., pl. 48.

§ "Five Monarchies," iii., 233.

judge from the sculptures so remarkably preserved at Nineveh and in Egypt. The very form of the bit and bridle is the same now as then.*

The Bedawin, the Circassians, and the Tartars never shoe their horses, and such seems to have been the case anciently.† Each country, too, has its own style of saddle, which, when introduced elsewhere, is used only exceptionally, and bears a name indicative of its origin. The "Egyptian saddle" is known in all parts of Western Asia, and so is the "Turkish;" both the *riding* and the *pack* saddle of several districts differ materially from one another.



Assyrian Women riding astride on a Mule. (Isa. lxvi., 20.)

The mule is held in high estimation throughout the East. It is greatly preferred to the horse as a beast of burden, on account of its sure-footedness, its ability to carry heavier loads, and the economy of its keeping, requiring but a quarter as much barley as the horse. It can not be purchased for less than four times the value of a common horse. The white mule is rare, and its price very high. This animal appears to have been known to the ancients nearly as early as the horse, for, as we have already stated, it is represented on the ancient monuments of Egypt.

The earliest mention of the mule, according to our version of the Bible, is found in Gen. xxxvi., 24, which some commen-

* 2 Kings xxxix., 28; Psa. xii., 9; Isa. xxx., 28. † Isa. v., 28.

tators have supposed to be a commemoration of the first discovery of the mule in a wild state. But the translation appears to be incorrect. The best authorities render the word, here translated "mules," by "*hot springs.*" This would be deemed even now an important discovery, and worthy of record.

The Israelites, until the time of David, would seem to have possessed very few horses or mules. The latter came all at once into fashion during this reign, for the king and all the royal princes rode upon mules.*

We have, at different times during a long residence in Turkey, seen the mule adopted by the grandees of some city, so that for several consecutive years none of the chief men of the place were seen riding on horses; yet the latter is usually preferred, and this seems to have been the case among the Hebrews after David's time. From this period the mule is incidentally mentioned as in use in the land of Israel together with the horse, as was the case in neighboring countries.†

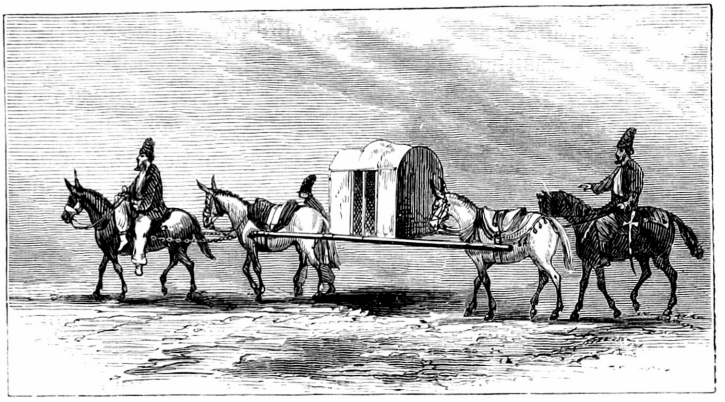
Absalom appears to have ridden his sumpter-mule while accompanying the expedition against his father.‡

The mules now most highly prized, on account of their superior size and strength, are those of Mesopotamia; such, at least, is their nominal origin; but being brought, many of them, from the regions of Harpoot and Mardin, they appear to be bred in the same locality as furnished those of Togarmah in ancient times.§ It is probable that to this breed belonged the two hundred and forty-five mules which the impoverished remnant of Israel had with them on their return from Babylon to the ruins of Jerusalem.‖

In order, however, fully to appreciate the value of the mule, we must consider that most of the internal trade in a large portion of Western Asia, as well as nearly all the traveling, is done by means of this animal. On the most frequented thoroughfares there are companies of three, four, or a dozen loaded animals almost constantly passing to and fro; but wherever the road is a little isolated, and especially where reports are circulating that Zeïbek, Koordish, or Bedawy robbers have appeared on the road, the travelers and muleteers wait for one anoth-

* 2 Sam. xiii., 29; 1 Kings i., 33.
‡ 2 Sam. xviii., 9.
‖ Neh. vii., 68.
† 1 Kings xviii., 5; Ezra ii., 66.
§ Ezek. xxvii., 14.

er, and keep together for mutual protection. Thus a caravan is formed, and though it contains horses and asses, yet the mules predominate, and are the most reliable. So it must have been in Bible times.* In these caravans and ordinary traveling companies may be seen a mingling of riders upon horses, traders perched on the top of their goods, children riding in large baskets—a pair of which is slung across the back of an animal—and women in "maffas." These last consist of two low, open boxes, three feet long and a foot and a half wide, cushioned within, and fastened on the sides of the pack-saddle of a powerful mule; two women are seated in them, while a light awning protects them above. Persons of wealth and rank, when journeying, often ride, either themselves or their families, in a "litter," or takhtravan, probably referred to in



Eastern Litter.

Isaiah lxvi., 20, and which corresponds to the palankeen of India, the traveler reclining on a mattress and cushions. It was doubtless such a litter that carried the children of Darius,† for it is used in Persia to this day for the conveyance of women, children, and the sick. In the "Arabian Nights," King Zahr is said to have prepared for the journey of his daughter a "litter" (takhtravan), covered with red cloth (still the universal custom), adorned with pearls and jewels, together with ten mules, to bear it in turn (two at a time). This vehicle is similar to an oblong box, or the body of a carriage, with a latticed door at

* 2 Kings v., 17; 1 Chron. xii., 40. † Quintius Curtius, lib. iii., cap. iii.

each side, and usually covered with crimson cloth; it is set and firmly fastened upon the middle of two long parallel poles or shafts, whose extremities are attached to the pack-saddles of the front and hind mule. Such a vehicle seems to be denoted by the word translated "chariot" in Cant. iii., 9. It occurs nowhere else in the Bible, and its literal meaning is "moving couch"—precisely the signification of the modern word "takhtravan."

The men who own the animals engaged in thus transporting travelers and goods are hardy, and usually form the entire male population of particular villages. Though their animals are not mules alone, but pack-horses and asses also, yet the former beasts are so much more highly valued for this purpose that these men are called *muleteers* in all the languages of the East. It is their great ambition to adorn all their animals about the neck, head, and haunches with broad bands of leather, carefully embroidered with coarse beads, shells, or colored wool; sometimes a sentence is worked upon the bands, and numerous bells of various size and tone are fastened upon them.* The object of these bells is twofold: should a mule stray from his companions, their sound enables his master to trace and secure him; and when entering the narrow streets of a market-town or village, the jingling of a hundred bells is not only a gratification to the muleteer's pride, but also serves as a warning against the mischief often done by his headstrong animals, as they go crashing against the shops or the luckless passer-by, for which he would otherwise be called to account. The inscription "upon the bells of the horses," "Holiness unto the Lord," spoken of by Zechariah, seems to us aptly illustrated by the above-named custom, and the meaning appears to be that the very trade and common business of the people would, in the fulfillment of prophecy, be consecrated to the Lord. All the more forcible will this language appear if we bear in mind that the muleteer of Western Asia is notorious for his profaneness and coarse brutality, and is often guilty of highway robbery and murder.

The ass was, probably, one of the first animals brought into subjection to the will of man, and made to share his toils. History mentions him as early as Abraham's time;† and the

* Zech. xiv., 20.

† Gen. xxii., 3.

wealth of the patriarchs, Abraham and Job, is said to have consisted in flocks, cattle, camels, and asses, no mention being made of the horse, which seems to have been, at that early period, unknown to the people of Canaan.

The natural docility and gentleness of this useful animal must have rendered his domestication an easy task, while the extreme economy of his keeping, and his powers of endurance, eminently fit him to be the poor man's servant.

The frequent allusions to the wild ass in the Old Testament make it evident that this animal was once common in all parts of Western Asia, though he is now confined to Arabia and Persia. We once saw a beautiful specimen, which was being conveyed by our friend Mr. Barker, of Aleppo, to the British Zoological Gardens, but never reached its destination, having died at Sinope, on the Black Sea. It was young, and had been caught but a little while before, yet it was gentle and tame. Its color was a reddish fawn, white underneath, with a dark line along the mane and back to the tail, crossed by a short line on the shoulders. This shows the fitness of the Hebrew name "khamor," signifying *red*, which is given to the ass in Gen. xlix., 14, and some other passages. A similar name, with like import, is also found in the Arabic, as well as the Greek, Latin, Spanish, and French languages.

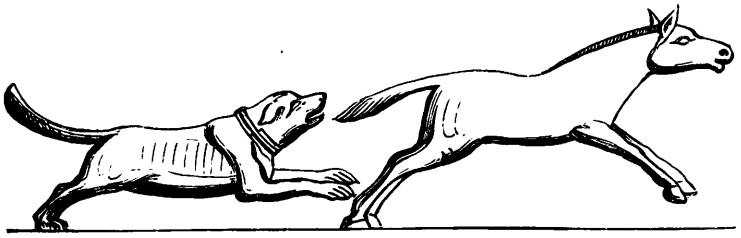
The disappearance of the wild ass from its former haunts is doubtless to be attributed to its being hunted down for its flesh, which was highly esteemed by the Greeks and the Romans, and which, though it was forbidden to the Jews, was probably eaten by their neighbors. It was, also, reduced to a state of domesticity, as is still the practice in Persia. The ancient kings of Nineveh hunted the animal as a pastime; so do the Persian nobility of our day. Olearius states that he saw no fewer than thirty-two wild asses slain in one day by the Shah of Persia and his court, the bodies of which were sent to the royal kitchens at Ispahan.* The fleetness of this animal, however, is such that no mounted horseman can hope to overtake it, and the only successful modes of hunting it are by means of hounds, or of relays which successively take up the chase as the game passes by, as described by Xenophon.†

* "Travels," p. 735.

† "Anabasis," lib. i., cap. v

Among the Assyrian sculptures there are many representing the hunting of the wild ass. The annexed is taken from Koyoonjik.

The descriptions given of this animal in its wild haunts correspond with the allusions contained in the book of Job,



Ass Colt pursued by a Hound. (Job xxxix., 5.)

and the Hebrew prophets. "Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass?"* All the beasts of the field bray, neigh, or bellow, as the expression of a want or a desire. "Who hath sent out the wild ass free?"† This and the context assert the original wild state, not only of the ass, but of all the brute creation, which is amply sustained by the science of natural history. "The wild asses quench their thirst"‡ are words which can be appreciated only in South-western Asia, and some portions of Africa, where the long summer drought leaves the land parched and dry; the "beasts of the field" boldly advance by night to the neighborhood of man's habitations to slake their burning thirst, and rejoice at the early autumn rains that replenish "the springs in the valleys which run among the hills."§ "A wild ass used to the wilderness, that snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure."‖ The deer, the gazelle, and other wild animals, which we have repeatedly met in the plains and on the hills of Syria and Asia Minor, are spirited creatures, and constantly "snuff up the wind" as they go; their scent is even keener than their sight, and they travel against the wind, the more surely to detect a lurking foe; and this is evidently the case with the wild ass, an animal as fleet and wary as any of them.

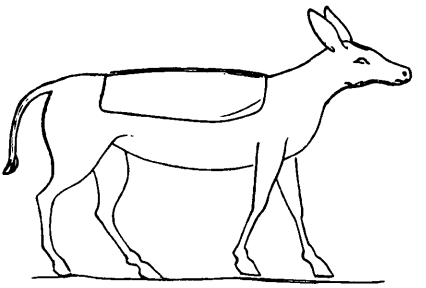
The domestic ass is probably more numerous in the lands of the Bible than any other beast engaged in the service of man.

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* Job vi., 5. † Job xxxix., 5. ‡ Psa. civ., 11.
§ Jer. xiv., 4–6. ‖ Jer. ii., 24.

It can be procured for so small a price, and kept at so trifling a cost in all the rural districts, that no one, however poor, need do without it. We have known a tolerably good donkey, in the interior of the country, to be sold for a single dollar, and we could name a man who rode his faithful beast a week's journey for the purpose of selling it at a sea-port town, and, having disposed of it for four dollars, trudged home on foot, quite satisfied with his bargain.

The ass appears to have been as common in ancient times as it is now, for even in the days of Job the wicked man is described as "driving away the ass of the fatherless."* The sculptures of Beni-Hassan, in Egypt, contain a very good representation of the domesticated ass, carrying a saddle of the kind which goes all over the East by the name of the "Egyptian saddle." The patriarch Job, in his later prosperity, owned no less than one thousand she-asses;† and, as a further evidence of the general use of this animal in early times, we may notice that in the neighboring country of Midian the conquering Israelites captured no less than sixty-one thousand asses.‡ Further, when Moses indignantly repelled the charges of the rebellious Dathan and Abiram, he declared that he had taken nothing from them, not even an ass.§ Samuel, the prophet, testifying his integrity, challenged the entire people of Israel to witness against him whose ass he had taken;‖ and it is at once an evidence how common was this animal, and to what great depths of poverty the remnant of the captive Hebrews were reduced, that, on their return from Babylon to Jerusalem, forty-and-two thousand three hundred and three-score souls of them brought but seven hundred and thirty-six horses, two hundred and forty-five mules, four hundred and thirty-five



Ass with "Egyptian Saddle." From Beni-Hassan. (1 Kings xiii., 13.)

* Job xxiv., 3. † Job xlii., 12. ‡ Numb. xxxi., 33.
§ Numb. xvi., 15. ‖ 1 Sam. xii., 3.

camels, yet as many as six thousand seven hundred and twenty asses, which, by-the-way, is about one ass to each household; indeed there were but eight thousand one hundred and thirty-six animals, all told; so that four out of five of the returning captives performed the entire journey on foot, as is done by the very poor at the present day.* But the strongest evidence that this animal was extremely common among the Hebrews is contained in the references made to him in the Mosaic legislation. He is, doubtless, included in the fourth commandment of the Decalogue, under the word cattle, and is distinctly mentioned in the tenth;† and Moses certainly enjoined kindness to animals, when he commanded the Hebrew to assist even his enemy to raise his fallen ass, an operation which can be performed for a loaded animal only by lifting up the burden on both sides at once, unless it be unloaded and loaded again, implying much loss of time, and even this often can not be done without assistance.‡ We are happy to testify that at the present day this precept of Moses is generally obeyed in Western Asia, not simply by those who profess to venerate his name, but even by the tribes who do not acknowledge it. Jew and Christian, Muslim and Koord, mutually assist each other, though inimical to one another's faith. We must not, however, gather from these passages that this animal was so common among the Hebrews as not to be appreciated. The wealthy and powerful, as we shall show farther on, did not disdain to own and ride upon the ass; suffice it here to remind the reader that King David, in the plenitude of his power, deemed no mean portion of his substance to consist in his herds of asses, and appointed an officer as "ruler" over them.§

There is a great variety in the breeds of this animal. Some are as large as an ordinary mule, and, when confined for several days in the stable, they become restless, and almost incapable of control; indeed, their pugnacity is proverbial. Jacob, in his blessing, does not cast reproach upon Issachar by comparing him to an ass;‖ he is the "strong, male, red ass"—for this is the meaning of the Hebrew here, and in Deut. xxii., 10—"couching down," rolling and feeding, in a rich pasture-land,

* Neh. vii., 66–69.
† Exod. xx., 10, 17.
‡ Exod. xxiii., 5; Deut. xxii., 4.
§ 1 Chron. xxvii., 30.
‖ Gen. xlix., 14.

between two "hedge-rows;" it loves abundance and its own repose too well to seek for freedom, like the wild ass, upon the steep and rocky heights, and is willing often to "bear the burden." The position of the tribe of Issachar, in the fertile plain of Esdraelon, left them at the mercy of the conquering hordes, who made it their highway, while the rest of Israel were able to defend themselves in their mountain districts.*

A very fine ass is found in Cyprus, which will keep up with any horse on a journey; these cost two hundred dollars, and even more. The Egyptian donkey, also, is highly appreciated in all the surrounding countries. The finest breed of this animal is the white ass, more rare than the white mule, and generally brought from the region of Bagdad. It is a spirited creature, and commands as high a price as eight hundred or a thousand dollars. The best way to obtain a correct impression of the comparative numbers and usefulness to the people of Western Asia of their mules and asses, is to post one's self not far from the gate of an Eastern city, toward sunset on a fine summer's day. It is a season of the year when all who possess a country house leave the heated atmosphere of the city, and seek the purer air and cool shades of their orchards and gardens; and there is scarcely a man so poor as not to own a small vineyard, with a little hut of mud-bricks, where his wife and children are glad to take refuge during the summer months, while he goes every morning to his work in town, and returns to them at night. Take your seat on that rude little stool, or mat, offered you at the coffee-shop close by the roadside, beneath the shelter of a booth of green branches, and beside a sparkling fountain or a sluggish stream. The scene of this evening exodus to the inviting country is thoroughly Scriptural. The people, their dress, their very speech, so similar to the ancient Hebrew and Syriac; the beasts they ride, with the housings and trappings which adorn them—all this, and much more that could be noted, vividly illustrates the scenes enacted in the same localities more than three thousand years ago. Notice how few of these people are mounted on horses or mules; you see at least ten asses to one other animal. There goes an entire family—the mother, with a babe

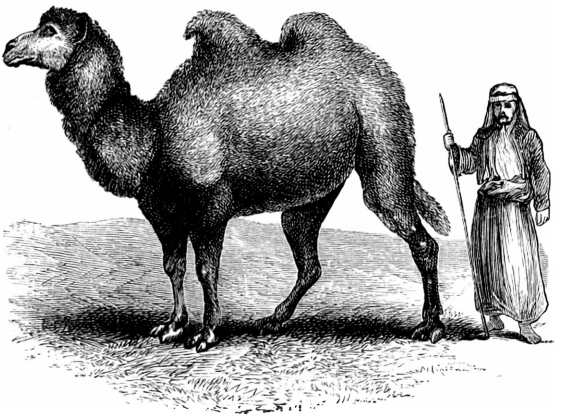
* Judg. iv.

in her arms, astride the family donkey, and bright little faces peering out of the basket slung at each side, while the father follows on foot, one hand upon the crupper, and a stick in the other. Yonder two youngsters, riding the same donkey, dash along, vigorously belaboring the poor brute with their bare heels, and striking him incessantly with sticks, laughing and shouting at the top of their voices. Here comes a long line of loaded camels, following a diminutive ass almost hidden from sight by the loose garments and gaunt form of the camel-driver, whose feet, encased in oddly shaped boots of red morocco, drag upon the ground. After these comes the white turbaned cadi, or judge, mounted on a fine, ambling Egyptian donkey, leading a whole company of Muslim grandees, similarly mounted, and followed by their pipe-bearers; they are the invited guests of the judge, going to spend the evening and night at his country-seat.

To the same extent was the ass used by the Israelites for riding and as a beast of burden; indeed, from the Exodus to the reign of King David, it must have been almost the only animal ridden by the Hebrews; for during this period the horse and the mule are not even mentioned as in use among them. The proud and mercenary Balaam went to meet the King of Moab, riding upon his ass.* The song of Deborah speaks of the judges of the land "that ride upon white asses."† Jair the Gileadite, one of the judges of Israel, "had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass-colts.‡ Abdon the Pirathonite, also one of the judges, "had forty sons, and thirty nephews, that rode on three-score and ten ass-colts."§ We likewise repeatedly read of the women of old riding upon the ass, attended by a servant on foot, a most familiar sight at the present day in all parts of Western Asia and in Egypt.‖ In such a case the servant performs the part of donkey-driver, making the animal go fast or slow, according to the wish of the rider. Often have we heard the words of the Shunamite, from the lips of ladies on somewhat similar occasions, "*Drive*, and go forward; slack not (the) riding for me, except I bid thee."¶ Zechariah's prophecy concerning the Messiah, who should

* Numb. xxii., 21, 22. † Judg. v., 10. ‡ Judg. x., 4.
§ Judg. xii., 14. ‖ Josh. xv., 18; 1 Sam. xxv., 23.
¶ 2 Kings iv., 24.

make his entry into Jerusalem "upon an ass," even "upon a colt, the foal of an ass,"* does not produce upon the Oriental mind that idea of abject poverty and humility which would be suggested to the Occidental. Had he come riding in a chariot, it would have been an emblem of earthly grandeur: had he rode upon a horse, he would have seemed a conqueror; his riding upon an ass only showed that he was gentle (πρᾶος),† and that the weapons of his warfare were persuasion and the diffusion of truth.‡



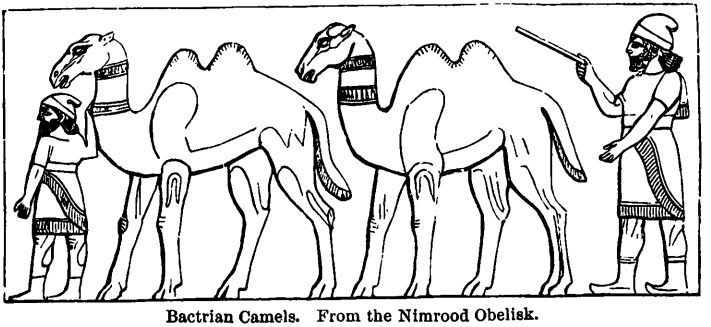
Bactrian Camel, seen in Asia Minor.

The camel is only incidentally mentioned in the Scriptures; yet enough is said of him to prove that he existed anciently in great numbers in the lands of the Bible, and that his useful qualities were fully appreciated by their inhabitants. We feel authorized, therefore, to conclude that he occupied as important a place in the life of those people as he does in the same countries at the present day, and that we may draw from our fuller acquaintance with the modern camel the materials with which to fill out the incomplete sketch of this animal contained in Holy Writ.

It was long supposed that there were two distinct species, called by some the Bactrian and the Arabian, and by others the camel and the dromedary. It is now, however, fully proved that the two varieties, properly denominated the Bac-

* Zech. ix., 9. † Matt. xxi., 5. ‡ 2 Cor. x., 4.

trian and the Arabian, form but one and the same species. They, indeed, differ considerably in their appearance, though not more essentially than some varieties of the horse and dog. The Arabian camel stands higher on his feet, and has a shorter body; but the chief difference between them consists in the fact that the Bactrian has two humps, while the Arabian has but one. The former is a much more powerful animal, with a longer body, and heavy masses of hair about his neck, shoulders, and haunches; still they are only varieties of the same species; for the common camel of Asia Minor is a cross between the two, which has the general form of the Bactrian, yet possesses but one hump. Both varieties appear to have existed from time immemorial; for the Arabian is represented on the monuments of Nimrood; and Mr. Layard states that



Bactrian Camels. From the Nimrood Obelisk.

the Bactrian, figured on an obelisk in the same locality, appears to have been brought from a distant country:* the latter is also portrayed among the bass-reliefs of Shehel-minar; this agrees with the present *habitat* of the two varieties. The Bactrian occupies the great plains of Tartary and Central Asia, with Northern China and Southern Russia, regions to whose climate he is well adapted. He exists in a wild state only in some portions of Tartary, having been allowed to go free, as is supposed, according to a custom of the Kalmucks. The Arabian camel, on the other hand, is found in India, Persia, Southwestern Asia, and throughout Northern Africa, to the Senegal. It does not appear to have existed upon the latter continent as early as in Asia, if we may judge from the monuments of

* Layard, vol. ii., p. 324.

Egypt; it was, however, known there in Abraham's time, being enumerated among the presents bestowed by Pharaoh upon the patriarch.* Camels are found wild, it is said, in some of the desert tracts of Africa, having, not improbably, strayed from a state of domesticity.

The earliest historical mention of the animal refers to him as domesticated, and fully subjected to the will of man. A portion of Abraham's wealth consisted of camels; and Job, in the height of his prosperity, possessed six thousand of these animals.† The Arabian variety is the one referred to in the Scriptures, and to this, therefore, we shall confine our remarks.

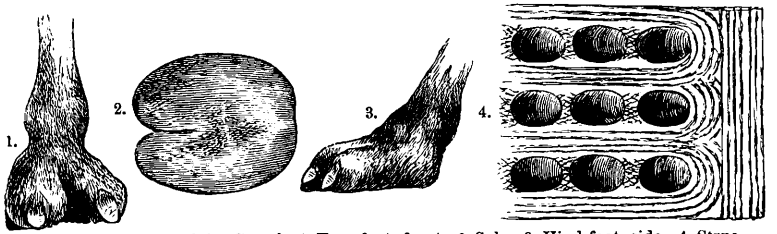
There is no stronger evidence, in the entire range of the animal kingdom, than this creature affords of a wise and beneficent design toward mankind on the part of the Creator. Vast barren tracts extend in several directions from the cradle of our race, by which one would suppose mankind would have remained shut up within the boundaries of the land they originally occupied. It has often been remarked that the sea, which appears only a watery waste destined to separate the nations of the earth, has, on the contrary, proved the chief promoter of that commercial intercourse which has ever been one of the most powerful agents of civilization. The same, essentially, has been true of the land-wastes of Asia and Africa, despite the inroads of those pirates of the desert, the Chaldeans,‡ and the Ishmaelites, or modern Bedawin.§ Similar deserts exist in other parts of the world, but they were not connected with the early history of our race, and no such animal was provided to enable man to traverse their dreary wastes.

The fact that the Arabian camel has essentially the same name in all the countries where it is found, is a proof that this animal occupied at first a very circumscribed locality, and multiplied, as did man, from an original stock. The name *gamal*, in Hebrew and Arabic, which we have changed to camel, is supposed by Gesenius to have been derived from the word *hamal*, signifying *to bear a burden*—a porter, denoting the use to which this animal has ever been put by man.

A close examination of the peculiarities of form and temper of the camel can not fail to excite admiration at his wonderful

* Gen. xii., 16. † Job xlii., 12. ‡ Job i., 17. § Gen. xvi., 12.

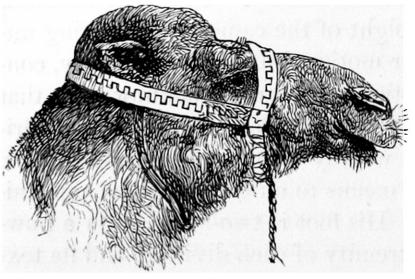
adaptation to the purpose for which he was evidently intended. Some people claim that he is very homely and uncouth. We believe this prejudice arises from the difficulty men experience in altering their standard of beauty. People of the East, who are accustomed to the sight of the camel, find nothing ungraceful either in his form or motion, but, on the contrary, consider him comely and majestic; and all must acknowledge that his figure adds not a little to the picturesque character of Oriental scenery. But what is worthy of our special attention is, the wonderful adaptation of means to an end, of which this animal is a living illustration. His foot is two-lobed, with a powerful nail or claw on the extremity of each division, and its texture closely resembles that of the human foot. He is thus emi-



Foot and Stomach of the Camel: 1. Fore-foot, front; 2. Sole; 3. Hind-foot, side; 4. Structure of one of the Camel's four Stomachs.

nently adapted to tread the sands of the desert. When the ground is wet, on the other hand, and becomes slippery to the iron-shod horse, the great weight of the camel's foot presses away the mud, and, placing him in immediate contact with the solid earth, appears to adhere to it like the foot of a fly to the ceiling, or as a piece of wet leather which little boys press upon the flat surface of a stone, and are thereby enabled to lift heavy weights. This is the reason why the camel, like the llama of South America, is fitted to climb the steepest mountains. He is appropriately called the "ship of the desert," because he is able to travel the arid sandy plain, and, with equal ease, the most rugged and barren mountains, which the term "desert" also includes; and travelers uniformly testify to his sure-footedness, even on the roughest roads. Other parts of the camel equally command our attention. His scent is extremely keen, so that he quickly detects a lurking enemy, whether man or beast; and he has been known, when traveling in the des-

ert, to discover water hidden from the sight of his master, and, breaking his halter, to rush frantically toward it in order to slake his thirst. His nostrils, moreover, are so formed that he can close them at will, so as to exclude the finest particles of sand; were it not for this, a far greater number of these valuable animals would be destroyed by the "simoon," or hurricane of the desert, as much feared by those who wander upon the land waste as is the typhoon by mariners in the China seas. The simoon seldom lasts more than fifteen or twenty minutes, though sometimes as much as two or three hours; it drives clouds of sand before it, and often buries whole caravans of men and animals. The camel instinctively knows its distant approach, and, uttering piteous cries, lies down with its back to the coming storm.* It has a blasting influence upon vegetation when it passes over cultivated regions, and so withers and burns the growing corn that no animal will touch a blade of it.† This is probably referred to in 2 Kings xix., 26. Indeed that part of the desert in which the simoon occurs is a wilderness of rock and sand, where one meets not the smallest trace or vestige of animal or vegetable life.‡ There is probably a reference to the ravages of the simoon in the account of the catastrophe which overtook the army of Sennacherib, when, on marching from Pelusium to attack Jerusalem, one hundred and eighty-five thousand men were destroyed in a single night; for, though Herodotus attributes it to another cause,§ yet the Scriptural account is much more distinct and probable.‖



Head of a Camel.

The camel's adaptation to traverse the desert is further shown by the small quantity of food he consumes, and the length of time he can abstain from water. In the desert, the Arabs wa-

* Job i., 19; Lane, "Modern Egyptians," i., Introd. 2; Bruce, "Travels," v., 323, 350.

† Morier, "Second Voyage," p. 43. ‡ Bruce, v., 351. § Lib. i.

‖ 2 Kings xix., 35; Isa. xxxvii., 7; Jer. li., 1.

ter their flocks once in two days, and the camels once in three; while, in traveling, the latter easily go without drinking for nine, and even for fifteen days;* and, according to the African Arabs, all the way from the Niger across the Great Desert, a journey of no less than forty days.†

The Being who designed this animal for the desert has provided him with an extra stomach in which to carry his water, just as the ship-builder provides his ship with casks or tanks for the same purpose; and it is an undeniable fact that travelers have, when in distress, quenched their thirst by killing their camels. It is amazing how small an amount of food will sustain so large an animal. When traveling, they are fed only once in twenty-four hours; this is in the morning, during the summer, as they then travel by night. A dozen camels or so are made to stand in a circle, with their heads toward the centre, while their master sets a small quantity of barley in the midst, to which straw is often added.‡ When fed upon dates or beans, a cake made from these is tossed into the mouth of each one in turn, as they kneel upon the ground. The camel takes his rest crouching down upon his breast and leisurely chewing his cud, moving his jaw to and fro in a manner quite peculiar to himself. Besides his regular meal, this animal, as he journeys, snatches mouthfuls of thorny shrubs growing by the wayside, and browses upon thistles, which cover the entire surface of the desert, evidently preferring them to any other food.

The wonderful adaptation of the camel to the barren waste has led to its adoption by the inhabitant of the desert, as his chief companion and main-stay. Thus it has been from time immemorial. In the days of the Hebrew judges, B.C. 1256, the Midianites and "the children of the East" came up "as grasshoppers for multitude," with their tents and "camels without number," and for seven successive summers "destroyed the increase of the earth."§ The same is now done every year by the Bedawy Arabs, under the impotent government of Constantinople; and the remnants of the people are compelled, as of old, to live in "dens which are in the mountains, and in caves and strongholds."‖ The Amalekites had many camels,¶

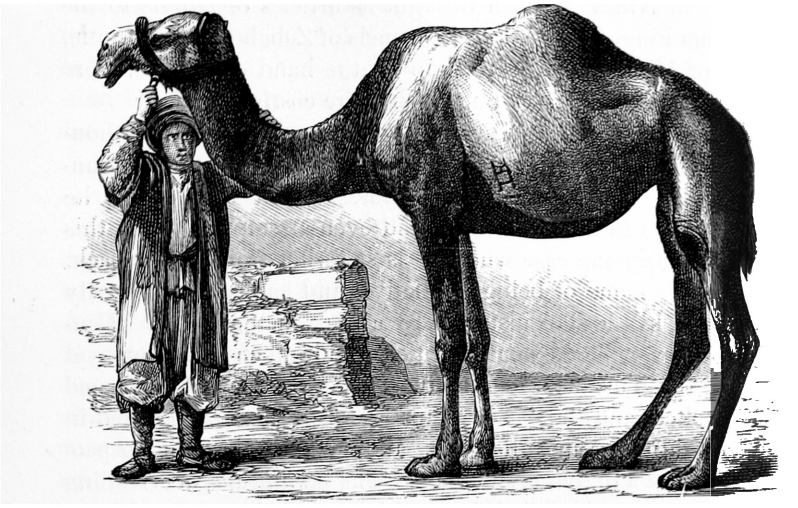
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* Tavernier, p. 47. † Bruce, v., 368. ‡ Gen. xxiv., 25.
§ Judg. vi., 1–6. ‖ Judg. vi., 2. ¶ 1 Sam. xxvii., 8, 9.

and so had the Hagarites.* The Israelites themselves, who lived upon the borders of the desert, found this animal very serviceable. Camels were owned by Isaac,† by Jacob,‡ by many of the people in King David's time,§ and by David himself,‖ and are often spoken of afterward, both in the Old and New Testaments, in a manner indicating that they continued to be familiarly known to the people of Palestine.¶ The present inhabitants of the same regions appear to value this animal quite as highly as their ancestors, for its numbers are not diminished. To give one illustration out of many, Thevenot speaks of a man by the name of Ali Bey, who, when he died, owned no less than "fourscore thousand camels, and about as many asses."**

But there is still another feature in the physical characteristics of this wonderful animal which pre-eminently marks him as designed for the service of man. Writers on this subject always speak of his hump as a reservoir of fat, which is drawn upon by the animal whenever kept on a low diet. Our observation, which has not been limited, does not accord with this opinion. We regard the camel's hump as his natural pack-saddle, intended to enable him to carry burdens for his master, man;†† and it would be difficult to conceive any better substance of which it might be composed. When remaining without work for any length of time, the camel's hump grows so high as to become pointed at the top, and to hang over on one side, as in our picture of a Bactrian camel, page 234; but his master usually takes care to keep it down by hard labor, so that it often almost disappears, just as would be the case with an artificial saddle which could not be spared long enough for needed repairs. It thus often happens that the poor overworked camel's back is covered with painful sores, plainly showing what would have been his plight were he not provided with a natural saddle; and such is often his condition, even with this provision, that the master is obliged to cut off with his knife considerable pieces of flesh in order to keep it from mortifying—an operation we have repeatedly witnessed. The following illustration will show the state of the hump of

* 1 Chron. v., 21. † Gen. xxiv., 10. ‡ Gen. xxx., 43.
§ 1 Chron. xii., 40. ‖ 1 Chron. xxvii., 30. ¶ Isa. lx., 6; Matt. xix., 24.
** Thevenot, 235. †† Isa. xxx., 6.



Overworked Camel.

many a camel at the end of winter. The pack-saddle used for the camel is large, heavy, and supported by a wooden frame, whose cross-bars project at the top. It is often decorated with coarse glass beads, small white shells (*Cyprœa aricia moneta*), and long woolen cords, with red or blue tassels hanging down on each side of the animal, which sway to and fro, as he walks, and help to keep off the flies. A bell is hung in front of the saddle, which gives notice when the wearer becomes separated from the line of his companions. The camel bells are among the most familiar Eastern sounds, occurring as they do in lands where are no church bells, and marking the solemn tread of the "ship of the desert," so unlike the incessant jingle of the mule bells. The same sound was familiar to the ancients; for in the antique sculptures camels are often represented with bells. Collars and bands of dyed wool, adorned with tassels and embroidered with shells and beads, often hang about the neck and head of favorite animals, while a showy ornament, with a looking-glass for a centre-piece, covers the entire forehead. They are also decked with long strings of little brass bells suspended from the saddle, or fastened to the head, legs, and even the tail. This is their holiday attire, and thus are they represented on the slabs of the

palaces of Nineveh, when brought as articles of tribute to the Assyrian kings.* The favorite camels of Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian, who were slain by the hand of Gideon, were ornamented in a similar but much more costly manner.†

A strong camel will often carry eight hundred and one thousand pounds' weight, but the ordinary load is about one hundred *rottles*, or six hundred pounds. When overloaded, he utters cries of distress or rage, and even attempts to bite; this is particularly the case when he is suffering from a sore back. He has the name of being vindictive, and has been repeatedly known to kill a man instantly by a kick in the breast. Usually, however, he is gentle, patient, and much-enduring; yet among the Turks his combative propensities are encouraged and excited, and there is perhaps as much pleasure enjoyed in camel-fighting as in bull-baiting and cock-fighting among people claiming a higher civilization. The *pekhliwans*, or wrestling camels, as they are called, have to be muzzled, for their bite at the throat of an antagonist is often fatal. Their struggle resembles a human wrestling-match till they resort to kicking; and the combat is ended by the flight of the vanquished.

In assuming a sitting posture, the camel first bends his forelegs and falls upon his knees, and then gradually settles down, so that his breast lies square upon the ground. The points of his body on which he is supported, seven in number, are protected by callosities or thickening of the outer skin. The thickest of these is heart-shaped, and lies upon the breast, while the rest are situated near the joints. Some writers claim that this posture of the camel is a thing taught him by his master for his own convenience, and that these callosities have thus been produced. We are aware that the camel has to be trained to kneel down or rise up at the word of command, which word or signal is a guttural sound or prolonged *kh*;‡ but we have never seen a camel resting otherwise, whether old or young, not even the new-born foal; if, then, this habit be artificial, it has become a second nature, and needs no longer to be taught. The callosities of the camel may, in our opinion, be deemed an additional proof that his present sitting posture is one natural to him. The elephant, when in a domestic state,

* Layard, ii., p. 324. † Judg. viii., 21, 26. ‡ Gen. xxiv., 11.

kneels down in a similar manner, but when wild he takes his rest leaning against a tree: he has no callosities in any part of his body.

In Bible times the camel was used, as at present, for conveying merchandise and as a beast of burden; there seem, indeed, to have been from the earliest periods of history regular routes for caravans of camels, mostly across or along the edge of the desert, which carried the produce of one country into another and returned freighted with articles of exchange. It was one of these caravans, bearing Midianite merchantmen across the desert from the region of Babylon, which carried Joseph into Egypt.* A similar caravan, following the same route, more than seventeen centuries later, brought the "wise men from the East," with a similar freight of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, to worship the new-born babe at Bethlehem.† From the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon, who came with a very great train, and camels that bore spices, and very much gold, and precious stones,‡ down to the visit of the Ethiopian eunuch who returned home from Jerusalem in a chariot, and carried with him the Christianity he learned from the lips of Philip,§ there had doubtless been frequent communication kept up between Ethiopia and Judea, chiefly by means of caravans of camels.‖

In riding the camel, the same saddle is used as for loading, a cushion being added for the greater comfort of the rider, who, when proceeding at a slow pace, sits or lies down in every imaginable posture.¶ A simple halter is used in guiding him. The camel also frequently carries a *maffa*, or two of them bear a *takhtravan*, vehicles already described as borne by mules. The passage in Isa. xxi., 7, may denote a litter borne by camels. It is supposed by some that the camel furniture in which Rachel hid the household gods of Laban, her father, denotes such a litter. To this view there are great objections. It can not be said that any one sits *upon*, but *within*, a *maffa* or a *takhtravan;* besides, these refinements of civilization, particularly the latter, were not likely to be found any more *then* than *now* in the tent of a nomad whose wife and children are accus-

* Gen. xxxvii., 28. † Matt. ii., 11. ‡ 1 Kings x., 2.
§ Acts viii., 26–39. ‖ 2 Kings viii., 9; 1 Chron. xi., 40; Ezra ii., 1–67.
¶ Gen. xxiv., 64; 1 Sam. xxx., 17.

tomed from their earliest years to ride in the usual manner. To us, the picture of Rachel seated upon the "camel furniture" is true to life, for we have often seen its counterpart. Jacob was hastily breaking up his encampment; his goods were packed and loaded, and, with his flocks and herds, already on the way. Rachel's favorite camel* knelt at the door of the tent; the saddle-bags and cushions, which were to be set upon him for her convenience and comfort, lay piled upon the floor while she sat upon them, that the carpets, utensils, and other articles, and, finally, the tent itself, might be packed and loaded upon the camels. Laban had arrived in pursuit the evening before, and had encamped at a short distance off. Jacob, with three days' start, had traveled seven days before he was overtaken. He now hoped to start off his entire company, with the flocks, so early in the morning that he would remain alone on the spot to encounter the wrath of his father-in-law. Laban doubtless discovered what was going on, and went over before the encampment was quite broken up. The favorable turn which Jacob's affairs then unexpectedly took induced him to remain where he was through the day and the following night, while his flocks and herds pursued their journey under the guidance of his shepherds and servants.† Our interpretation of this historical incident essentially agrees with the view of the matter taken by Josephus; the only difference is that in the "camel's furniture" he includes the camel's large saddle, within which he supposes the images to have been secreted; and this may have been the case, or, as we have suggested, the camel may have been already saddled for Rachel's use.‡

The attempt has often been made to establish a specific distinction between the dromedary and the common camel, which does not exist in nature. It would be as reasonable to consider the saddle-horse a distinct species from the pack-horse.

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* Gen. xxxi., 17. † Gen. xxxi., 54.

‡ Josephus, "Antiquities," bk. i., chap. 20. The foregoing objections to the *takhtravan* and *maffa* equally apply to the contrivance described by Layard, "Nineveh," i., 101. The "Arabian Nights" (p. 453) mention the *hodage* on which sat the Princess of Yemana, upon her *hetnaka;* and the note explains that "the ladies of Arabia ride upon female camels, and sit upon a carpet rolled into a sort of cushion called *hodage;*" but we think that in the case of Rachel the "furniture" includes more than this. The word *hodage* is now often used as synonymous with *maffa*.

The dromedary is only a more highly-bred animal, well tended, trained to the best paces, and never loaded. His long, swinging gait is trying to the rider, being a racking amble; but his speed is great, often amounting to seven or eight miles an hour, and he can travel long without stopping. He is often employed by the couriers or posts, as in ancient times.*

The powers of endurance, speed, and utility of the dromedary, or riding camel, may be exemplified by the following circumstance: before the establishment of a telegraph line from England to Bagdad, the British resident at the latter place received his mails far in advance of every one else by dromedary post, which traveled once a fortnight from Damascus to Bagdad, right across the desert, a distance of eight hundred miles, which was performed in nine days. The dromedary was changed three times during the entire journey, in one part of which there was no water for three days.†

The camel has often been used in warfare, both in ancient and modern times. He is thus represented on the monuments at Nineveh, was so used by Bonaparte in Egypt, and is still employed in like manner by the present viceroy.‡

We have described the valuable qualities of the camel, chiefly to the nomad of the desert, both as a beast of burden and for riding. We ought to add that his usefulness is not limited to these particulars, for his master eats his flesh, drinks his milk, wears sandals made of his skin, uses his manure for fuel, is clothed in garments woven from his hair,§ and often dwells in tents whose curtains are made of the same material. His bleaching bones lie scattered in the desert, attesting his life-long fidelity to his master.‖

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* Esther viii., 10, 14; Jer. ii., 23.

† Ussher, p. 493.

‡ In the celebrated battle fought under the walls of Sardis between Cyrus and Crœsus, the cavalry of the latter fled at the sight and smell of the camels, which formed the first rank of the Persian army. Some writers have inferred from this circumstance that the horse always has an antipathy for the camel; that Cyrus had no cavalry in his army, etc. (Gillies, "Ancient Greece," vol. i., chap. vii., p. 321.) This is a mistake. It is well known in the East that the horse is always frightened *the first time* he sees a camel, but he very soon becomes accustomed to him, and does not mind him at all. He is also frightened the first time he sees an ass. We have often made both experiments. The incident in the battle of Sardis only proves that camels were rare in Asia Minor in the sixth century before Christ, which is not the case now.

§ Matt. iii., 4.

‖ Thevenot, p. 177.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WILD BEASTS OF BIBLE LANDS.

THE description contained in Job xxxviii., 39–41; xxxix., 1–30; xl., 15–24; and xli., 1–34, is an epitome of the wonders of Natural History, as known in the days of that patriarch. The difficulties of interpretation presented by the poetic style of these passages have been greatly enhanced by the attempt to identify the creatures here spoken of with such as could be found in the country where Job dwelt. This is evidently a mistake, for no one has claimed that the peacock, for instance, was indigenous to that region; it could only have been known by report through the descriptions of travelers, and by the specimens brought from India.* The creatures described in the book of Job, with regard to the identification of which there has been a difference of opinion, are few in number, and we imagine that the above-mentioned principle will go far toward settling existing doubts. What animal, for instance, but the elephant can be intended by behemoth,† whose "nose pierceth through snares;" who manages his powerful proboscis and its finger-like extremity with such skill as to unravel and destroy any combination of snares and nets that may be set to catch him; who delights in the water, and who seems huge enough to swallow up "a river"—"even Jordan"—if such a rendering of the word be insisted upon; who lifts up his tail like a cedar when he charges an enemy? "He that made him has furnished him his weapon,"‡ his sharp tusks; and, unlike the hippopotamus, as to fodder, "the mountains bring him forth food where all the beasts of the field play." "He is," moreover, "the chief of the *works* (Hebr.) of God," by which nothing can be meant save that he is the largest known creature living. Nor is it likely that the elephant was unknown in Palestine in Job's time, and that its inhabitants were ignorant of the valu-

* 1 Kings x., 22. † Job xl., 15–24. ‡ Drake's Translation.

able ivory obtained from his tusks, while they were acquainted with the peacock, which existed in the same countries as the elephant.* Ivory has been discovered in some of the oldest remains of Nineveh and Egypt. The elephant was well known to the Israelites in the days of Solomon; for in 1 Kings x., 22; 2 Chron. ix., 21, the word translated *ivory* in our version means, literally, *elephants' teeth.* At a later period the elephant became common in South-western Asia, being employed in warfare, as is still practiced in India. Darius and Antiochus are particularly mentioned in history as having many elephants in their armies; and the Shah of Persia even now keeps state elephants, and rides on a very elegant *howdar.*† We have already spoken of the unicorn, or reem (Hebr.),‡ in our account of the cattle of South-western Asia.

As for the leviathan,§ both this description and a comparison with Psa. civ., 26, makes it evident that the word was used not in a scientific but a popular sense, to denote the large, scaly monsters that dwell in the water, whether it be the river or the sea. It is evident that the crocodile was then supposed to have considerable affinity with the shark, and both being called by the same name, most of Job's description applies to the former, while some portion can refer only to the latter.‖ The words, "maketh a path to shine after him," doubtless refer to the phosphorescent light which shines in all parts of the Mediterranean whenever a large fish, or boat, or even an oar, moves rapidly through the water, and which is produced by the small gelatinous animalculæ which swarm in that sea. The word leviathan has even been applied to a large sea-serpent, or python, whether real or imaginary, on account of the scales which cover it, like the crocodile,¶ and has also been used with reference to a many-headed "dragon" dwelling in the sea, doubtless imaginary.** The ancient heathen nations had many legends referring to this monster, and many people inhabiting the Levant still believe in its existence.

The lion exists no longer in South-western Asia, except in some isolated and comparatively inaccessible districts. Schwartz states that he is still occasionally met with, as of old, in the

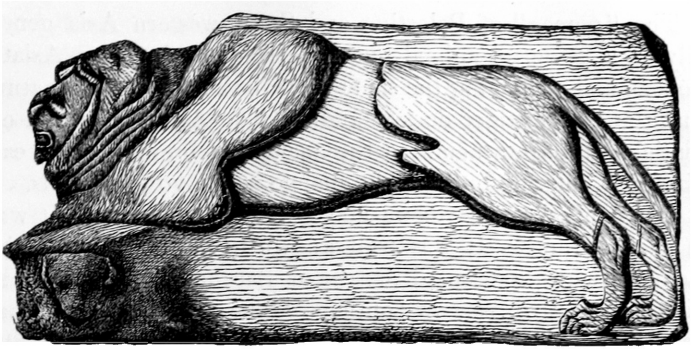
* Job xxxix., 13.
† Morier, "First Journey," p. 210.
‡ Job xxxix., 9–12.
§ Job xli.
‖ Job xli., 31, 32.
¶ Isa. xxvii., 1.
** Psa. lxxiv., 13, 14.

desert between Palestine and Egypt;* but he is mostly confined to the vicinity of the banks of the Euphrates between Bussorah and Bagdad, where impenetrable jungles and reedy marshes afford him a protection against the deadly fire-arms of modern times.† Both the black-maned and the maneless varieties have been seen in this region; but the more common kind is what naturalists call the Asiatic lion, to distinguish it from the African, being somewhat smaller, more compact, and having a short, curly mane. There is abundant proof, however, that the lion was anciently common, not only in Palestine, but in all the adjoining countries: no animal is more frequently or spiritedly represented in the hunting scenes of the bass-reliefs of Nineveh and Egypt. The former of these are especially remarkable for their spirit and truthfulness; and it shows the careful observation of natural phenomena by these people that they represented the claw at the end of the lion's tail, of whose existence modern naturalists doubted until lately. Sculptured lions of various dates are common among the ruins of the ancient cities and temples of Asia Minor, particularly at Euyuk and Angora. Even in Greece the figures of two lions adorn the gate-way of the Cyclopean wall of Mycenæ, the city of Agamemnon, who led the Greeks to the siege of Troy. It is, moreover, an interesting fact that, in all the languages spoken by the present inhabitants of Western Asia, there exist numerous proverbs and popular expressions attesting an intimate acquaintance with the character and habits of this animal; and considering the little intercourse which exists with neighboring nations, we are safe in tracing some of these expressions at least to a time when the lion was as common as he is represented to have once been both by the Scriptures and by ancient historians generally. He is still regarded as the emblem of manly courage and physical strength;‡ and the family name of "Son of a Lion" has been adopted by many, both Muslims and others, who claim, whether right or wrong, that an ancestor of theirs has performed some act of unusual prowess. We learn from Johannes Phocas, who traveled in Palestine toward



Claw at the End of the Lion's Tail. Assyrian Sculpture.

* Isa. xxx., 6.
† Jer. xlix., 19; Ezek. xix., 3.
‡ Judg. xiv., 18; 2 Sam. xvii., 10.



Maneless Lion at Euyuk, in Asia Minor.—Side View. (Gen. xlix., 9.)



Front View of the same.

the end of the twelfth century, that lions were still to be found in his day in the reedy coverts that line the Jordan.*

The panther is called "namer" in the Hebrew Bible, which means *spotted.* His skin is covered with dark spots beautifully arranged in regular circles upon a fawn-colored and white ground; these are alluded to in Jer. xiii., 23. Our version calls this animal a leopard, a word which was coined only in the 4th century, to distinguish the African from the Asiatic panther.

* Reland, "Palestine," i., 274.

The "namer" of Palestine and South-western Asia generally, is a powerful animal but little smaller than the Asiatic lioness, and occupying the same place in the economy of nature that the Bengal tiger does in India. The Arabs give him essentially the same name as the ancient Hebrews. They call him *nimr*, making but a slight change in the vowel sounds.

The panther seems to be about as common now as it was in ancient times. It was well known to the Greeks and the Romans, who represented the car of Bacchus, one of their divinities, as drawn by two panthers. The habits of this animal bear much resemblance to those of the lion, with this great difference, however, that the latter is not found upon lofty mountains, but frequents the coverts of the warm and sunny plains, while the panther only traverses the low grounds in the night in quest of prey, and spends the day amidst the barren rocks and crags of lonely and inaccessible cliffs, where he is occasionally spied by a wood-cutter or adventurous hunter lying at full length, and sunning himself on the flat summit of some rocky precipice.* A friend of ours pointed out to us not long ago a spot where he had seen a panther stretched out unconcernedly, on a broad flat rock on the steep bank of the river Damoor, in Southern Lebanon. The "tiger tracks" which Lynch repeatedly saw upon the reedy banks of the Jordan were doubtless made by panthers; for at night-fall this animal steals down from his lair to scour the valleys and the plains in search of prey: he has been known to traverse in a single night a distance of twenty-five to thirty miles. Like the lion, he avoids an encounter with man, unless wounded by him, or apprehending an attack; but should he chance to get a taste of human flesh, he is said to seek and prefer it, as does the lion and the Bengal tiger.† The panther, however, usually spends but a few days in the same locality. He is greatly dreaded by all the beasts of the field, which hide themselves at his approach, and dare not venture forth to feed at night, as is their wont. We have repeatedly taken our stand on the top of some isolated rock or cliff on the edge of a plain, whence we could study the wonderfully varied sights and sounds of an Oriental summer's eve. The day had been silent, the voice of the birds even be-

* Cant. iv., 8.

† 2 Kings xvii., 25; Jer. v., 6; Bruce, vi., 143.

ing hushed by the heat, and the "cicada" alone heard in a monotonous concert from every shady grove; even this sound grew gradually silent as the mountain shadows lengthened across the plain, and the sunlight died away. The rays of the moon, however, were hardly perceptible before the song of the cricket commenced; the cry of a solitary jackal was heard from the edge of the wood, and was presently answered by one, then by another and another of his companions, until the grand chorus was repeated by the mountain echoes; the fox barked close by, the owl screeched, and the great owl in the wood uttered its mourning cry as it watched for the hare that darted through the shadows.* We could hear the footsteps, and occasionally catch a glimpse of a whole troop of wild boars, old and young, as they came hastening down from the woody coverts of the mountains to wallow in the mire, and dig among the roots of the plain. Truly it seemed as though Nature herself were keeping *Ramazan*—fast asleep all the long day, and waking up at eve to spend the entire night in work, revelry, and fun.† But how different was the scene when a panther had come into the neighborhood! It seemed as if a scent of blood and carnage was pervading the atmosphere, communicating to every creature telegraphic notice of the danger nigh. I have on such an occasion again repaired to the same post of observation, the evening was perhaps more beautiful; the song of the cicada had died away, and that of the cricket succeeded it, giving the signal for all to be up and doing; but, even before darkness came on, the horses and cattle in the plain were to be seen hastening home, and such as had no shelter clustering close together in evidently apprehensive groups. No wild boars hurried down the mountain to luxuriate in the marsh; no jackal or fox dared utter his cry; not a sound broke the ominous stillness; all seemed determined to fast that night rather than, by stirring, to draw the attention of the common foe, who, they well knew, was stealthily prowling about, "seeking whom he might devour."‡

The panther crawls silently toward his prey,§ and, approaching it unperceived,‖ leaps suddenly upon its back,¶ and bury-

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* Deut. xiv., 16; Mic. i., 8. † Psa. civ., 19–23. ‡ 1 Pet. v., 8.
§ Psa. x., 10. ‖ Hos. xiii., 7. ¶ Hab. i., 8.

ing his fangs in its throat, quickly strangles his victim. This mode of attacking his prey is evidently taught him by nature, for he begins to practice it at a very early age. We once knew a panther's cub which leaped upon the back of a cow at pasture, when the latter, panic-stricken, started with her novel burden full speed for home; the young panther meanwhile appeared to enjoy the race, and bravely held on till brought into the midst of a village, where he was easily captured by the astonished rustics.

As soon as this animal has strangled his prey, he drinks its blood, and then, satiated, retires to his nearest lair. He comes again the next night, and so also the third, after which he leaves the neighborhood, and the remains of his feast are devoured by wolves, jackals, and other scavengers. During the three days, however, that the panther feeds upon his prey, the lynx alone dares venture near or share it with him. This latter animal is of the size of a large cat, and of a uniform fawn color. He is characterized by a tail only six inches long, and a tuft of stiff hair on the point of each ear. He usually lives on birds and field-mice, but seeks the companionship of the panther to so great a degree that in some regions of the country the presence of a lynx is a sure sign that his powerful patron is not far off. This relation between the two has its exact parallel in that which exists between the shark and the little pilot-fish. The spotted lynx, however, is so abundant in Northern Asia Minor, where the panther is unknown, that his beautiful skin is an article of exportation. He there preys chiefly upon hares, for which he lies in wait at night.

The shepherds are the chief sufferers from the depredations of the panther, though he occasionally kills a stray horse or cow.* It was thus that David had to encounter both a lion and a bear.† We have known several shepherds who had fought the panther single-handed with various results. The following came under our personal observation: A panther had killed a goat belonging to a flock, whose shepherds, however, determined not to interfere with an enemy they deemed too strong for them. But a beardless youth among them declared he would be avenged for the loss of his favorite goat.

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* Gen. xxxi., 39; Amos iii., 12.

† 1 Sam. xvii., 34-36.

He borrowed an old single-barreled flint gun, and, with a loaded pistol in his belt, lay in wait for the enemy a few paces from the body of the slaughtered victim. The sun had hardly set when he heard a slight noise among the pebbles on the high ground behind him, and, turning round, he saw to his surprise a huge panther, crouching like a cat, and apparently on the point of springing upon him. The young shepherd, nothing daunted, took deliberate aim at the heart of his antagonist, and fired. He had hardly pulled the trigger, however, when the panther leaped, and the lad barely saved himself by as quickly falling forward on his face to the ground. In this position he drew his pistol, and was fortunate enough to lodge its ball in the head of his already wounded foe. Overjoyed at his success, the young man climbed to the top of the hill and shouted loudly to the shepherds in the plain below, "I have killed the panther!" They would not believe him, however, but thought that he was fooling them. He was compelled, therefore, to tie his girdle around the panther's neck, and thus to drag it trailing along as best he could to the fold, when the dogs all fled at his approach, and the astonished shepherds gave full vent to their joy and surprise.

The panther must not be confounded with the beautiful and graceful spotted creature, not very much larger than a cat, properly called shitah, and trained to hunt for his masters in Persia and Hindoostan. This animal has probably never existed in South-western Asia, though the skin is often offered for sale at Constantinople, Beirut, and Alexandria, being brought by peddlers from Bagdad and Bokhara. These skins are highly prized by Muslims, and especially Dervishes, as praying-rugs, which they fancy render their devotions more efficacious. The skin of the panther is preferred on account of its larger size, but it can rarely be obtained, and costs from ten to twenty-five dollars. The skin of the stag, roebuck, and wild goat are equally esteemed for this purpose. The shitah, or hunting leopard, does not appear ever to have existed, either wild or domesticated, in any of the lands of the Bible; he is not figured upon the monuments of Egypt or of Nineveh, but on both the lion is represented as chained and employed in the chase. A wild cat is found in Asia, but it is no larger than the domestic animal, and may either be its original stock,

or has been derived from it. The tame panthers which have been seen by travelers in Palestine were doubtless specimens of the shitah, obtained from India or Persia.*

In 1847 we made the first sketch of the then unknown monument of the Kaïm Hùrmùl, as it is called, near the sources of the Orontes, in Cœle-Syria, which sketch has been published in Thomson's "The Land and the Book," vol. i., pp. 364, 365. This monument consists of a solid structure in the form of a square tower crowned with a pyramid; its entire height is about seventy-five feet, and its four faces contain life-size bass-relief representations of animals and implements of the chase. The only mention of it made in authors not modern is by the Arab geographer, Abulfeda (A.D. 1320).† There is now no inscription, but there can be little doubt that it is a sepulchral monument; for it resembles the Tortosa tombs, as well as those of Absalom and Zechariah at Jerusalem, and the one at Suweideh.‡ A slab has indeed fallen from the southern face of the monument, which probably contained an inscription.

The wild animals figured on this interesting structure are doubtless those most common in the region at the time of its erection. They are still the most common beasts of the chase in the greater part of Western Asia, and we shall make use of these sculptures as the text of our further description.

1st. The gazelle is represented as pursued by a dog. We have seen this beautiful creature feeding in small companies on the surrounding plain even to the foot of this very monument, and, when alarmed, bounding away with inimitable grace to the nearest hills. It is still hunted by the Arabs with greyhounds, which with difficulty overtake it on the plain, but have to give up the chase as soon as the game takes to the rocks.§ The word translated *roe* in many Scripture texts properly signifies a *gazelle.*

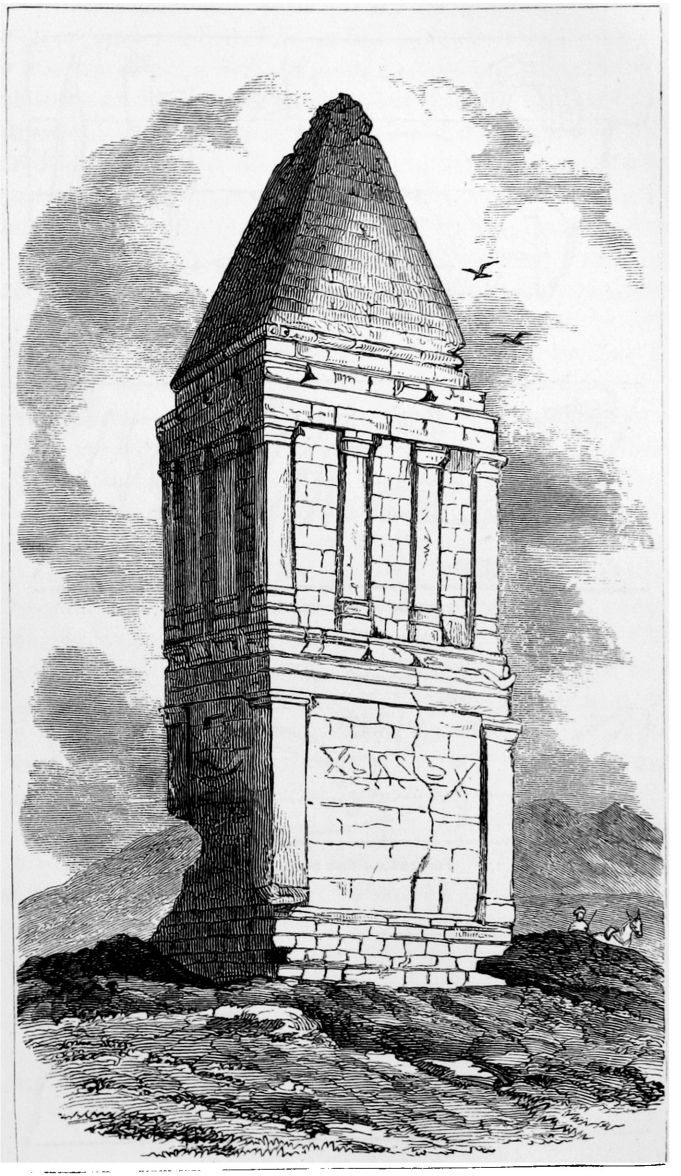
2d. The wild boar is attacked by two dogs, as is still done in the battues, which often take place on Mount Lebanon under the leadership of the sheikhs. The scene is highly spirited,

* Thomson, "The Land and the Book," vol. ii., pp. 156, 157.

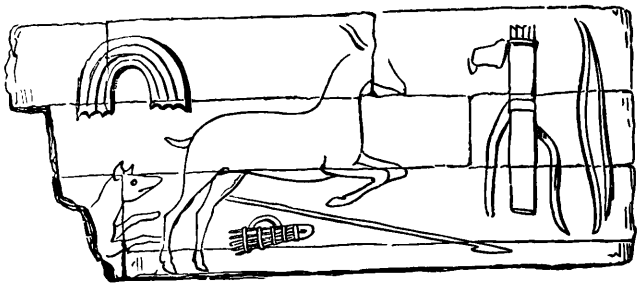
† "Tab. Syr.," p. 150.

‡ Porter's "Damascus," ii., 121. Similar Roman tombs were found by Barth in Northern Africa. See "Travels," vol. i., pp. 114, 119.

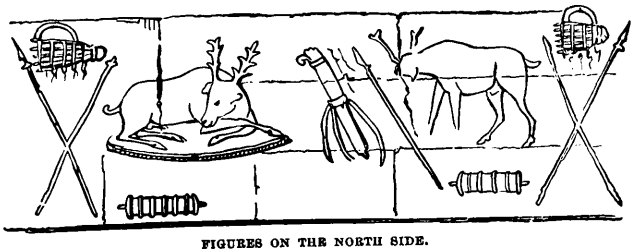
§ 1 Chron. xii., 8; Prov. vi., 5; Isa. xiii., 14.



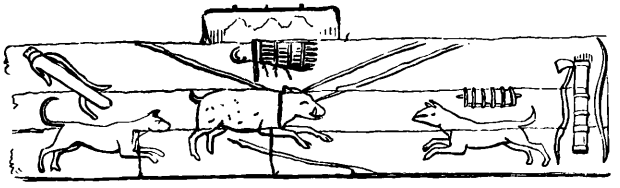
The Kaïm Hùrmùl, in Cœle-Syria.



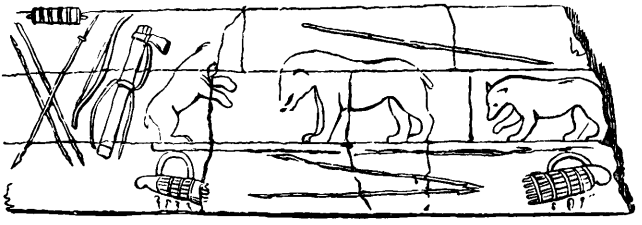
FIGURES ON THE WEST SIDE.



FIGURES ON THE NORTH SIDE.



FIGURES ON THE SOUTH SIDE.



FIGURES ON THE EAST SIDE.

Carvings on the Kaïm Hùrmùl.

and is drawn from life: three spears are stuck in the body of the beast, and a fourth lies on the ground; but he fights to the last against the fierce hounds that beset him. These appear to be of the same breed as is still used in this sport, with ears erect, and long curling tail. They are the powerful short-haired shepherd-dogs of the hilly regions. The Asiatic wild boar seems to be the same in all respects as that found in Continental Europe, the young of both having the same longitudinal stripes on the back. The prohibition of swine's flesh originally made by Moses to the Jews,* and subsequently adopted by the religion of Islam, whose followers constitute the bulk of the population of South-western Asia at the present day, has caused these animals greatly to increase in the land; so that they often commit extensive ravages, and sadly destroy the crops. Hence the Muslims are frequently compelled to go out with their guns at night, and lie in wait for their cunning enemy, or to hunt for him in the day-time with dogs, whether two or three together, or in general battues; in Mesopotamia, however, he is hunted with a spear on horseback. When successful, as their laws do not permit them even to touch the "unclean beast," they sell him for a trifle to a Christian, or, failing to find a customer, leave the carcass to be devoured by vultures and jackals. There are professional wild-boar hunters; but these are always either Christians or gypsies.

The wild boar lies in a covert during the day, whether among the reeds which skirt a river or swamp, or in the densest thickets of the forest-clad mountain. They come forth to feed at night, plowing up the ground with their powerful tusks in quest of tender roots, bulbs, and grubs, preferring the loose soil of cultivated fields; they eat acorns with avidity, also the pods ("husks") which fall from the carob-tree,† and greedily consume the standing crops, approaching boldly, though cautiously, down to the very threshing-floors. They break through the hedges of the vineyards, and devour and trample down quantities of fruit in a single night.‡ Their scent is extremely keen, and effectually warns them against danger. In the winter, when the snow covers the mountain tops, they select a large evergreen-tree, whose branches, shed-

* Lev. xi., 7; Deut. xiv., 8. † Luke xv., 16. ‡ Psa. lxxx., 13.

ding the snow, pile it into a circular wall, and shelter themselves during the day within this little natural fortress; the wood-cutter sometimes comes suddenly upon a whole family of them thus quietly resting together. The male is large, and armed with powerful tusks, with which he inflicts severe injuries when attacked or wounded.

The wild boar may be domesticated only when taken very young. We remember a specimen owned some years ago by Mr. Stevens, the British consul at Samsoon, on the Black Sea, which used to accompany its master with his dogs on shooting expeditions, and Mr. Stevens assured us that, owing to its keen scent, this sporting pig was generally the first to find the game, alive or dead; he particularly prized it in pheasant-shooting. The only inconvenience was that, not having been taught to fetch, and being extremely voracious, it devoured the game which it caught. We ourselves saw it in full pursuit of a hare in company with the greyhounds.

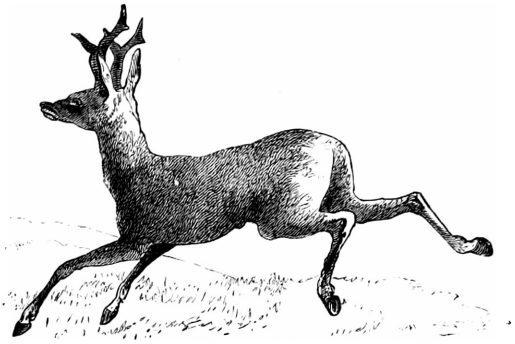
The wild boar continues to make his lair in the woody solitudes of Tabor, Carmel, and Lebanon,* and abounds in the reedy marshes of the Upper Jordan and in the swamps below Damascus. And it is interesting to note that, in the sculptured monuments of ancient Nineveh, he is represented as lurking among the reeds, where he is still found on the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates.†

3d. The antlered stag and the roebuck. The former abounds in all the forests of Asia Minor, particularly on Taurus and Anti-taurus, where it is now hunted by "stalking." The latter is still more extensively known, but equally seeks the protection of the forests, and frequents the edge of mountain streams. It is sometimes caught in a snow-drift, and is easily tamed and kept as a pet in the yard or garden, like the gazelle. We have known several of these graceful creatures thus domesticated, and have had occasion to notice their wonderful fleetness, and to witness some of their extraordinary feats of leaping. The expression "swift as an elik" (roe), is a proverb among the Turks.‡

There are several species of antlered stags, the largest of which, a magnificent animal, we have repeatedly seen "leaping

* Psa. lxxx., 13. † Layard, i., 109. ‡ 2 Sam. ii., 18.

upon the mountains,"* or guarding the rear of a small herd of hinds and young deer. In the summer they may sometimes be descried early in the morning feeding on the edge of the forest, the hart apparently unconcerned, but the hinds ever watchful and timid; nor will they sit down to take their rest without first selecting some high commanding position,† and



The Roebuck of Western Asia. (2 Sam. ii., 18.)

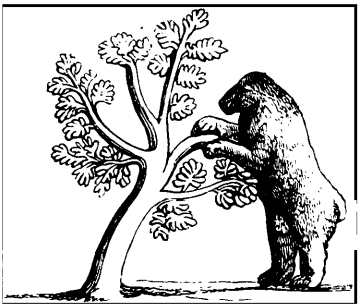
even then, while nodding, they frequently turn their eyes warily, or raise their nostrils in different directions, and when they discover a lurking enemy, bound lightly away with amazing swiftness and agility. It is evidently in a similar position that the pair are represented on the Kaïm Hùrmùl, though both are bucks; for one is feeding while the other sits and watches. These animals assemble in vast numbers on the summit of certain mountains at the beginning of winter, and the natives call these places their *tekkehs*, or meeting-houses. They migrate thence in various directions, without appearing to affect the number of deer found in any locality.

4th. The bear is represented in a spirited manner with two cubs, one of which is standing on its hind feet. This animal has always been common in all the mountainous or hilly portions of Western Asia, but has never existed in Egypt, Arabia, or Southern Mesopotamia. We give a copy of a representation of him taken from an Assyrian cup, which indicates that he existed anciently, as now, upon the neighboring mountains of Koordistan. The first historic mention of this animal now

* Cant. ii., 8, 9.

† 2 Sam. xxii., 34.

extant is found in 1 Sam. xvii., 34–36; and among the many notices of him none is more famous than his encounter with Godfrey of Bouillon at the siege of Antioch (A.D. 1098) by the Crusaders; nor did the Bruin of the eleventh century prove inferior to those of ancient times, for the brave knight barely escaped with his life.*



Bear from an Assyrian brass Bowl. (2 Kings ii., 24.)

We have all read accounts of fearful encounters with the bears of Russia and of the Pyrenees. The same animal essentially inhabits Asia Minor and Syria. There are varieties of color among them; for some are of a dark-brown, almost black; others yellowish, with a dark line of long stiff hair from the neck to the tail; others, again, have a large circular ash-colored spot on the top of each shoulder-blade. These varieties of color do not seem to depend on age, sex, or season of the year; for we have seen two cubs taken from the same litter, one of which was almost black, while the other was marked with the above-mentioned white epaulets.

The bear is powerful, keen-scented, sagacious, and cunning. He is generally harmless, and greatly terrifies people by the cool, unconcerned manner in which he makes his nightly calls to the choicest fruit-trees even close to an inhabited dwelling. He often delays his return to the mountains till broad daylight has revealed his unwelcome presence, and raised a "hue and cry" around him; he then makes a dignified retreat, apparently surprised at the commotion he has occasioned. These depredations of the bear are very extensive; for he not only consumes a vast quantity of fruit, but breaks many branches of the trees on which he climbs, and roughly handles other people's property. He is also at this season quite partial to a *bath*, and does not hesitate to jump into the large tanks or reservoirs of water to refresh himself after his repasts. We have heard of a bear's cub, who, whether in imitation of his mother, or led by his own

* Michaud, "Croisades," iv., 111.

instincts, once leaped into a tank whose water was low, so that when he had drunk his fill, and performed his ablutions, he found the wall so high that he could not get out again; he was discovered there the next morning, and soon dispatched by the indignant proprietor.

As long as the fruit season lasts, the bear is well-behaved and harmless. He hides on the lofty mountains during the day, and comes down at night to the gardens, or orchards and vineyards, and skillfully avoids the snares laid for him. Honey is his favorite food, and he will often run considerable risks in order to gratify his greediness for it. We remember an adventure of Bruin which ended in his death. A swarm of bees had made their hive in the cleft of a precipitous rock. Bruin had doubtless scented the dainty morsel as he passed along in his nightly maraudings, in quest of cherries and apricots in the gardens below; he determined to secure it, and must have climbed to a considerable height, for he was found stone dead in the early morning at the bottom of the cliff.

When winter comes, and the snow covers the lofty mountains which he inhabits, the bear withdraws to a cave, and awaits the return of spring in a dormant state. It is during the interval between the cessation of autumnal fruits and crops, and his retirement to winter-quarters, that he manifests his carnivorous propensities, and becomes ferocious and aggressive even to man. He prowls about mountain villages, and fiercely attacks the flocks of goats and sheep, even in broad daylight. We remember visiting a village on the Anti-taurus which the day before had suffered the depredations of a bear of monstrous size. He had surprised a flock of goats, and when attacked by the shepherds and their dogs with a hue and cry which brought out every villager from his hut, he had slowly retired, flinging stones at his pursuers with such accurate aim and force that severe wounds were inflicted on them. Later in the day he had gone boldly into the fold on the edge of the village and carried off a goat, which he dragged to a hillock near by and deliberately devoured, in plain sight of the inhabitants, who, not possessing a single gun, dared not disturb the audacious brute. He was pointed out to us ranging over the hills, already covered with a slight fall of snow; and, watching with our spy-glass, we saw him dig up the remains of another goat,

which he had partly devoured and buried there.* We have repeatedly known the bear at this season to fall upon and devour children who had strayed out but a short distance from the mountain villages; and we particularly remember a Turkish girl about thirteen years of age, who thus lost her life on the Ak-dagh, near Amasia.†

Some have supposed that the bear has not the thirst for blood which is characteristic of the wolf or panther. He sometimes, however, seems quite as ferocious, and has been repeatedly known to kill apparently for the pleasure of it. In a certain mountain village the sheep were shut up in one of those stables which are partly dug out of the mountain side, and have a room in front built of rough stones, with a flat roof overhead, and a broad chimney. The door was made fast at evening, and the dogs, being released from duty, had sought refuge from the cold in their master's house. A bear came, however, at dead of night, and, descending by the chimney, strangled every one of the sheep. After gorging himself with their blood, he piled their bodies in the wide fire-place, and climbing thereon escaped unperceived!

About the end of the year the bear ranges in various directions in search of winter-quarters; these are usually a cave among the rocks, but he sometimes digs a hole and burrows under-ground on the mountain side. He lies for a while near the mouth, or on the outside of the entrance, to make sure that no intruder will disturb his retirement, and there prepares a bed of twigs and dried leaves (oak by preference). He always lies facing the opening, and with one of his paws in his mouth making a loud purring all the time. The native hunters insist that he is very thin in flesh when he goes to sleep, but very fat in the spring when he wakes up. The snow sometimes covers the opening, and completely hides the cave; but experienced hunters can generally detect certain peculiar small openings, caused by his breathing, which indicate his presence within. It is hard to rouse him from his stupor, and a shot has to be fired, or stones thrown in, to start him. Should he then meet with a single antagonist, he does not hesitate to attack him, and generally has the best of it. Bears remain

* Dan. vii., 5.

† 2 Kings ii., 23, 24.

about a month in their dens. The cubs, usually two in number, are born during this period, and remain in the same place a couple of months, after which they follow their dam through the rest of the year. Hence a she-bear with two cubs is no uncommon sight, and the bass-relief of Kaïm Hùrmùl is a faithful picture drawn from life.

When attacked in her den, the she-bear will not hesitate to abandon her cubs, and seek safety in flight; hunters are then tempted to carry off her young; but she soon discovers her loss, and then nothing can exceed the rage with which she pursues the robber. His only safety is in dropping the cubs and fleeing, for she will still follow him after safely depositing them in her den, and indeed attack any man she may then meet.* A she-bear robbed of her whelps, or a bear interrupted while making his arrangements for the winter, is more dangerous to encounter than any other wild beast in Western Asia; this is intimated in the Scriptures,† where the lion and the bear are represented as equally to be dreaded. When rushing upon an enemy, his speed is great: rising upon his haunches, he leaps upon his foe with the momentum thus acquired, and, clasping him in his deadly embrace, bites at his throat and tears his bowels with the formidable claws of his hind feet. When standing up, the bear reaches the height of a tall man, and the weight of a full-grown specimen is rarely below four hundred pounds, about one-fifth of which consists of fat.

The narrative contained in 2 Kings ii., 23–25, has sometimes been objected to by persons who, we apprehend, have been misled by a defective translation, or have failed to attend to the circumstances of the case. The path of the prophet Elisha lay through the district of Bethel, the stronghold of idolatry in Israel,‡ where, as in Dan, stood one of the golden calves set up by Jeroboam. There was a crowd of idle young men on the outskirts of the town, lawless, rude, and amusing themselves—perhaps throwing stones with their slings—for the word translated "little children" in our version is the same in Hebrew as that used in 1 Kings xii., 8, 10, 14, where it is applied to young men of the same age as King Rehoboam—41. In all the lan-

* 2 Sam. xvii., 8; Hos. xiii., 8.

† Lam. iii., 10; Amos v., 19.

‡ 1 Kings xii., 28–33.

guages of the East, moreover, the words "child" and "children" often denote simply a social relation, and are constantly applied to full-grown persons, as in the New Testament.*

No one who has traveled in the East can have failed to notice the extreme lawlessness of a certain class of boys and young men living on the outskirts of a town, especially toward a Jew, a Christian, or a European, who should happen to be passing by alone or unprotected. Let him go, for instance, to the castle-hill of Smyrna; and if it be a holiday, and the "boys" (oghlans) are out, he will perceive stones whizzing past him, and will hear the shouts of "Frank," "hat-wearer," "Giaoor," rallying the rowdies of the vicinity, and warning him to beat a hasty retreat.

Elisha, as he slowly ascended the path leading past Bethel, alone and weary, was recognized as the servant of the obnoxious Elijah; he was soon surrounded by a crowd of bitterly hostile and lawless young men, presently increased to a mob by the accession of others "coming out of the city." They abused the prophet's person, pelted him with stones, knocked off his turban, and, seeing his shaved head, hooted after him, saying, "Go up, go along, bald head," throwing stones after him. In imminent danger of his life, he stood at bay—as we have done in similar circumstances—and looking upon his fierce assailants, he invoked the help of the God he served, and whom they had exchanged for a molten calf; and He instantly sent forth "two she-bears out of the wood" of Ephraim, which killed forty-two of them, and scattered the rest. This was the last blow that needed to be struck at idolatry in Israel for the re-establishment of the worship of the true God.

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* John xxi., 5; 1 John v., 21.

CHAPTER X.

THE SCAVENGERS.

No one has spent any length of time in Western Asia, or visited any considerable portion of the interior of the country, without noticing the unusual number and variety of animals, birds, and even insects, that feed upon the refuse and offal, and devour the carcasses of other species. On the highway, the ass, mule, or camel, which has fallen under its burden, and is no longer able to rise, is unloaded by its master, its saddle, halter, and even its shoes are taken off, and it is scarcely dead when its skin, too, is hastily removed, to be sold to the tanner; the carcass is left where it fell; and as the traveler passes by upon the narrow road, his horse is frightened, not more by the repulsive scent and sight, than by the eagles, vultures, ravens, crows, and magpies that take wing on his approach, or continue to dispute the prey with hungry dogs.* When night comes on, however, the winged devourers withdraw, and give place to sneaking jackals and foxes, and to the hyenas and the wolves, which now warily quit their lairs, and hasten to secure a share of the feast.

But these are only the occasional repasts of the scavengers, whose habitual resort is the "dunghill"—a prominent feature of every village; the large towns have several, generally on the outskirts, but sometimes on the edge of the public square, or on the site of a ruined or burned building.† These dunghills are formed by the accumulation of useless broken articles, the sweepings of the houses, stables, and streets, thrown there by the inhabitants, together with all kinds of refuse, and the carcass of every creature that dies in the town. According to the Mosaic law, the offal of slaughtered animals had to be burned without the camp, and this was done at Jerusalem, in the valley of Hinnom, or Ge-hinnon, called "Gehenna" in the

* Matt. xxiv., 28.

† Ezra vi., 11; Dan. ii., 5.

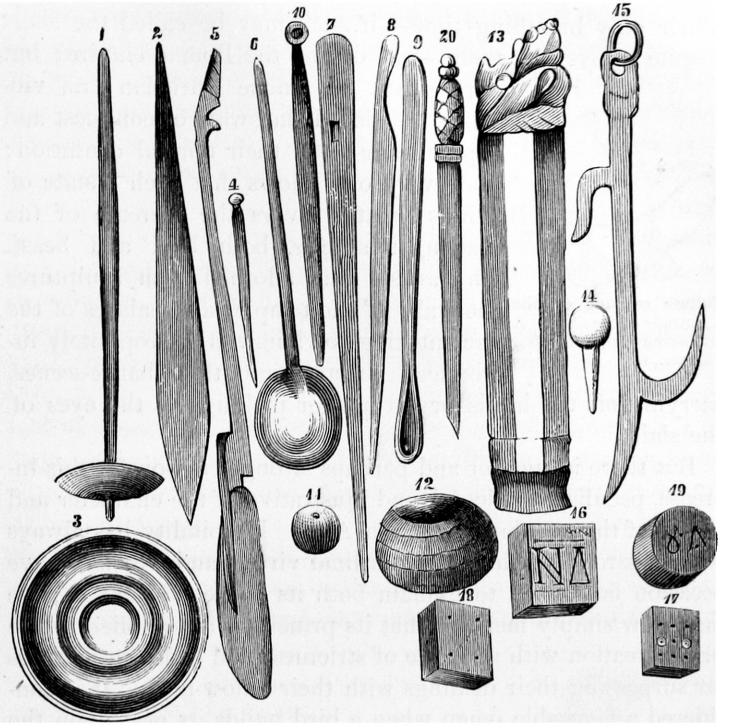
New Testament, whose name came to be applied to the eternal abode of the lost.* This custom is everywhere kept up by the modern Jews, who render themselves very disagreeable neighbors to other sectaries by the offensive fumes of such fires.

In every place, however, the dunghill is the resort of a variety of animals and birds, which strut about, regardless of the presence of man, with a boldness never shown elsewhere. Various birds of prey may be seen coming down with a swoop, or sitting on the roof of a neighboring house, gorged with their foul repast; while it is hard to say whether the animals which feed on the noisome heap, and take their rest curled up beside it, are mangy curs or jackals. As for the rats, they glide about with perfect unconcern.

These dunghills are a very old institution. Those of ancient cities are sometimes discovered by digging, or are laid open by winter rains, which cut a trench through them, bringing to light bones, shells, fragments of pottery, lamps, utensils, toys, the household gods, and even coins and valuable jewels.† The annexed illustration will give some idea of the smaller articles, taken at a venture, which are found in these dunghills. They are mostly of ivory or bone, copper, and rarely of glass—substances which are little or not at all oxidized. In our engraving, Nos. 1–10 and 13 are of the former; 11 and 12 of glass, and 14–19 of copper; 1, 2, 3 are spindles; 4 is a pin, and 5 and 6 are spoons; 7 is a tape-needle; 8, 9, 10 are ear-picks; 11, 12 beads; 13, an ivory knife-handle, with a lion's head; 14, a copper nail; 15, a meat-hook; 16–19 are balance-weights, one of which is of lead. Eleven of these are very nearly identical in form with the modern articles. There are often copper and sometimes silver coins; but the most common are articles in baked clay; not only broken plates, jars, and lamps, but also images of the gods.

Dunghills are mentioned in the Scriptures. Gates owed their name to the circumstance of their being situated near to one of the dunghills, the refuse and rubbish of the town being carried through them.‡ The only class of human beings that did, and do still, frequent these loathsome places are the wretchedly poor, or friendless beggars, who come here in search of

* Matt. v., 22. † Dan. iii., 29. ‡ Neh. iii., 14; xii., 31.



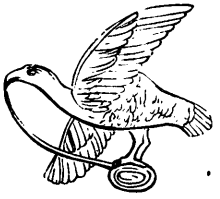
Household Articles found in an ancient Dunghill. (Ezra vi., 11.)

any stale scrap of food or cast-off garments they may chance to find.* Even on the water, the traveler who approaches an Oriental city can not fail to notice the numerous gulls, cormorants, or other sea-birds which flutter about almost within reach of one's hand, and dispute together for every morsel of food or offal cast by the inhabitants into the sea.

The unusual development of the scavenger species in Western Asia is doubtless owing to several distinct causes, the chief of which may be found in a beneficent provision of nature, which thus averts a danger produced by the climate. We must also bear in mind that Western Asia and Northern Africa are the portions of the earth which have been longest occupied by man, and possessed in turn by rival empires and states, whose hostile armies were ever engaged in destructive wars.

* 1 Sam. ii., 8; Lam. iv., 5.

Their only breathing-time—if such may be called the short respite enjoyed by them—was during the Roman empire; but throughout the entire Christian era, violence, bloodshed, and wars of conquest and rapine have been their normal condition; and every one knows that such a state of things greatly favors the increase of the scavenger species, both bird and beast. The artists who adorned with sculptures the walls of the temples and palaces of the ancient kings of Nineveh appropriately introduced vultures into their battle-scenes, carrying off the heads or entrails, or picking out the eyes of the slain.

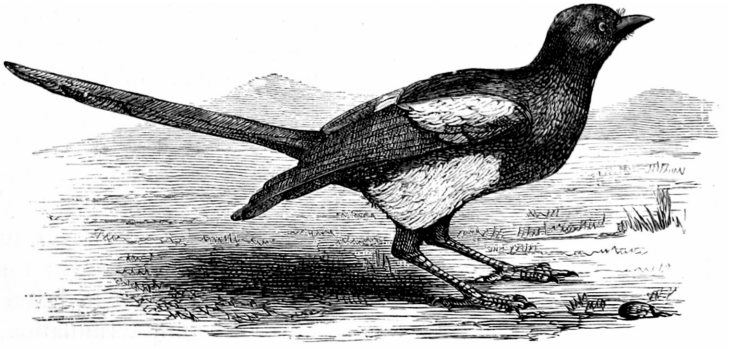


Vulture carrying off the Entrails of the Slain. A Nineveh Sculpture. (Isa. xxxiv., 15.)

But there is another and perhaps stronger reason for this increase, peculiarly Oriental, and illustrative of the character and habits of the people of Western Asia. Hospitality has always been regarded by them as a cardinal virtue, and we shall have occasion farther on to explain both its cause and extent; we may now simply mention that its principles are applied to the brute creation with a degree of strictness and conscientiousness far surpassing their dealings with their fellow-men. It is considered a favorable omen when a bird builds its nest upon the roof of the house, although that bird may be the stork, which has repeatedly been known to bring live snakes to its young, which, escaping, glide down into the house, to the dismay of the inmates. A sportsman never fires at a jackal or a wolf, unless caught in the very act of depredation, and when he meets a hyena will only hoot and spit at it. Hence all these creatures greatly multiply. The sparrow-hawk builds its nest under the very eaves of the farmer's dwelling, and carries off the young chickens before his eyes; jackals burrow in the sides of the nearest hills, and set up their yelping chorus every night, as they gather to invade his vineyard or his crops; the cunning fox creeps about his hedges, eats his fruit, and destroys his poultry; and the hyena disentombs and devours his dead.

It is not always, however, a losing game; this hospitality to the brute creation often brings its own reward. The natives, for example, always allow the swallow to build its nest about their premises, in the gate-ways, under the balconies, and even

in the very apartments they occupy. A friend of ours, having purchased an extensive farm, found the principal building studded in various places with clusters of swallows' nests, which had remained undisturbed for a series of years, and to which the birds returned each spring, as is their wont. These nests struck him as so untidy that he had them all removed, and gave orders that no swallow should thenceforward be permitted to take such a liberty with his premises. The very next season, however, the *flies* multiplied to such a degree as to become quite intolerable. They could be compared only to Egypt's fourth plague.* Every invention extant in the civilized world for getting rid of these pests was tried in vain. Strings and bunches of heath were hung from all the ceilings, and the swarms collected on them at night were burned with gunpowder; but all to no purpose. The only remaining alternative was then tried—the swallows were allowed to return. When we visited the place the following summer, scarcely a fly was to be seen! We counted the nests, and, calculating the number of young reared in them twice in the year, we found that eight thousand flies a day would furnish but ten for every bird!



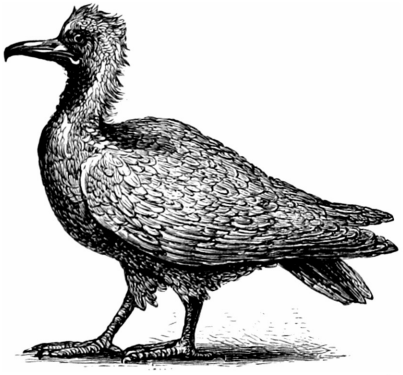
The long-tailed Magpie.

The scavenger birds need little description. The chief of them are the eagles, vultures, crows, and magpies. They all possess the keenest scent for carrion, and every hunter knows that whenever he brings down his game he may expect the scavengers shortly to appear, though no trace of them may be

* Exod. viii., 24.

visible.* The eagle is frequently alluded to in Scripture; for he evidently was as common anciently as now, and had the same habits. He does not hesitate to feast upon the dead, though he mostly lives by hunting. We have had repeated opportunities to watch him in the pursuit of game, and particularly remember a poor hare on the top of Mount Taurus so paralyzed with fear at the sight of his dreaded foe descending like a shot to the earth, that the eagle walked slowly up to him, and plunged his talons into his sides without his victim making any effort to escape.

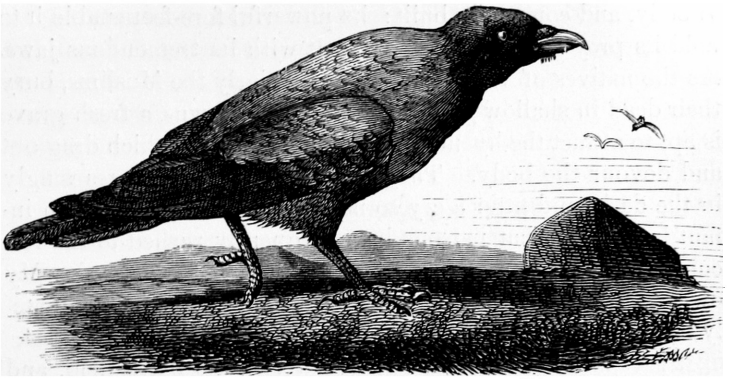
One species of vulture is particularly interesting, as explaining a passage of Exodus. It is the rashama, very common in Egypt, where he is called "the Bird of Pharaoh," and well known in some other parts of Turkey under the Turkish name of *Ak Baba*—the "white father." It was venerated by the ancients as the type of parental love, for it was believed to feed its young with its own flesh. They also thought there existed no male of this bird, and that the female possessed in herself the perfect power of reproduction. Some of the early Christian writers argue thence that Christ being born of a virgin was not contrary to the natural order of things.† It is interesting, however, to find that Moses made no such blunder in natural history; for rashama has in Hebrew a feminine termination; but in Exod. xix., 4, and Deut. xiv., 13, he adopts a masculine termination, and changes the word to rasham.‡



The Rashama, or "Bird of Pharaoh." (Exod. xix., 4.)

But the most commonly seen scavengers are the magpie and the cinereal crow, mostly black, but partly of a dirty white. The magpie makes himself useful by picking off the horse-flies from the cattle, sheep, and even the deer, and is hence on

* Matt. xxiv., 28. † Tertullian, "Valent," c. 10; Bazil, "Hex. Hom.," 8.
‡ Bruce, vol. vi., pp. 201–203.



The Crow of Western Asia. (Prov. xxx., 17.)

terms of familiar friendship with them; but he is a shameless thief, prowling about the kitchen and back yard, and ready to come down from the roof, the top of the wall, or the adjoining tree, where he is on the watch, as soon as your back is turned. The ravens which supplied with food the prophet Elijah* were probably not the large jet-black birds of that name, but the much more common cinereal crows; it is also the young of the latter which are noted for being very noisy.† But there are also scavenger animals, which characterize the country, and are spoken of in Scripture.

The hyena is not often mentioned in the Bible, yet there is no doubt that this animal was common in ancient times. The valley of Zeboim evidently derived its name from the hyenas, which either usually or at certain seasons frequented its wild gorges; for it is now called by the Arabs "Shuk ed Dubba"—*the ravine of the hyena.* This loathsome animal will not attack living creatures unless hard pressed by hunger, but feeds almost exclusively upon carrion, and has itself a most offensive, cadaverous odor. It sometimes equals a large dog in stature, but is always low in the hind-quarters, short



The Asiatic Hyena. (Zeph. ii., 15.)

* 1 Kings xvii., 6.

† Psa. cxlvii., 9.

in body, and compactly built; its powerful fore-feet enable it to hold its prey firmly while tearing it with its tremendous jaws. As the natives of Western Asia, particularly the Muslims, bury their dead in shallow graves outside of the towns, a fresh grave is apt to attract the hyenas of the neighborhood, which drag out and devour the body. They prowl about the villages singly in the dark, and utter a cry so nearly resembling that of an infant in distress that persons have frequently rushed to the rescue, and have been fiercely attacked, and even devoured. My own father had such an adventure in his youth, but fortunately succeeded in wounding and driving away the savage beast.

It is especially in seasons of warfare, on the battle-field, and in the massacre of the inhabitants of towns and villages, that hyenas revel and feast upon the bodies of the slain. At such times, not only these hateful beasts, but four-footed and feathered scavengers of every kind collect together from great distances,* and for a long period infest the districts to which they were thus attracted. We find a striking example of this in the Syrian massacres of 1860. The sect of the Druses, exasperated by the boasted plans of the Maronites, or papal Christians of the mountains, that they would soon, with the aid of France, bring them completely under their power, and set on by the bigoted Muslim rulers of the country, rose upon the Christian population of every sect, and put to death in cold blood no less than eleven thousand persons, mostly men. Their bodies, left unburied, became the prey of ravenous birds and beasts of the field, which multiplied in some districts to such a degree as to make it unsafe for men to go about unarmed. In the large village of Hosbayah, on Mount Hermon, where the victims are said to have amounted to twelve hundred, hyenas have so greatly multiplied that not long since the inhabitants dared not leave their houses at night for fear of the hyenas that prowled in the streets, hiding by day amidst the ruins of the burned dwellings.†

The wolf may be classed among the scavengers, for he indulges in the eating of carrion whenever opportunity offers. He is chiefly, however, known as a fierce and voracious enemy

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* 2 Sam. xxi., 9, 10; Ezek. xxxix., 17–20.

† Deut. vii., 22; 2 Kings xvii., 25, 26.

of the shepherd and his flock. This animal is common in Syria and Palestine, not only upon the wooded heights of Lebanon and Carmel, but in Judea as well, where he hides on the rocky heights and in the thickets of the plain by day, and ranges over the country by night in search of prey.

Kitto's "Encyclopædia" is evidently at fault in claiming that the true wolf is not at present found in the Holy Land, and that the only species now existing there is not gregarious, and is so small that it can not carry off a lamb or sheep. The animal to which he refers is probably the same as is called by the Greeks of Asia Minor "lyco chakalos," whose solitary cry we have often heard, but have never succeeded in getting a sight of him.

The wolf varies in color with age. He is usually tawny, with long black hair thinly scattered on the upper part of the body, and so closely resembles the more respectable street-dogs of Turkey as easily to be taken for them. The full-grown male is more than thirty inches high, and of a gray color, turning nearly white with age, when he looks exceedingly like the best breed of shepherd-dogs. This animal is gregarious, each pack consisting of from six to twelve individuals—probably constituting one family, for thus does the number of a litter vary. Half a dozen males sometimes forage together, and frequent the same lair, appearing to have no family ties. It is a singular fact that the wolf seems to be the only animal in South-western Asia that becomes spontaneously rabid. When in this state, he rushes fearlessly at man and beast, and will even watch on the road to bite the passer-by. A few years ago hydrophobia became very prevalent in a certain district of Asia Minor; so that not only men and dogs were affected by it, but almost every species of animal suffered in consequence —cattle and donkeys rushing madly through the fields, biting whatever came in their way. The disease was traced to some wolves, which were known to have rushed down the mountain, and to have bitten shepherds' dogs, sheep, and cattle.

We have already spoken of the ravages committed by wolves upon flocks of sheep and goats,* and will only add here that their attacks are made chiefly in the night, and in dark and

* John x., 12.

stormy weather;* and that the creature is powerful enough to carry off a sheep after killing it.

The wolf is not satisfied, however, with the food thus obtained. When winter sets in, and snow covers the mountains, the flocks are kept under shelter, and are either fed in the stables, or taken out only in broad daylight. Wolves then grow bold and ravenous with lack of food. They even attack travelers upon the highway, not in large packs, as in Russia or in the forests of Germany, still in numbers sufficient to overpower single foot-passengers as they cross the mountains. We have known wolves in winter to enter a large town in the night, and, in spite of the dogs, pick up whatever food they could find in the streets. We even remember an instance of a family who were sitting at their evening meal, when a wolf walked boldly into the room and sought to share their food.

At this season of the year the wolves upon all the high mountains live mostly by hunting; for as the sharp hoofs of the wild boar, the stag, and even the lighter deer sink into the snow, they are taken at great disadvantage by their ravenous enemies, who glide over the frozen crust with ease, pursue them in packs, drive them to some precipice, and force them to leap headlong from its brink, after which they descend to the bottom and feast upon their mangled bodies. The stags and the deer, when thus relentlessly pressed, instinctively feel that man alone can save them from their foes, and make for the nearest hamlet. They are not unfrequently found in the morning within the walls of the cattle-yard, or stabled with the oxen and sheep. We were once crossing a snow-covered mountain on foot, when we came upon the recent tracks of a herd of stags mingled with those of numerous wolves. Curious to read in these novel characters the story of a wild episode, we followed the tracks for some distance, and soon found that one of the younger deer had evidently become separated from the rest, and, thus singled out, had been pursued by the whole relentless pack. The poor creature had then turned down the mountain, and, after some extraordinary leaps and dodges, had succeeded in reaching the broad path of the wood-cutters, which led to the village; but, alas! at a distance of not more

* Jer. v., 6; Hab. i., 8; Zeph. iii., 3.

than a hundred yards from the nearest houses we came upon evident traces of the closing struggle. The snow was trampled down over a considerable surface, and bunches of the stag's hair were scattered in every direction, but not even a bone remained to tell the tale.

The ferocious and untamable character of the wolf renders him a fitting object of comparison, of which the Scripture writers have not unfrequently availed themselves;* and the contrast between the wolf and the lamb is used graphically to express the difference between the character of the wicked and that of the righteous, as well as to portray the genuine effects of the doctrine of Christ.† The well-known fable of the wolf that charged the lamb with troubling the water, though standing lower down the stream, and found in this a reason for devouring it, appears to have an Oriental origin. It is well known, and often repeated among the people of South-western Asia.

The dog has already been spoken of in connection with the flocks of goats and sheep, which he is employed to protect against their numerous enemies. We have also described the light and beautiful greyhound, so frequently seen among the nomads, and kept by wealthy proprietors for hunting hares and gazelles, as the hawk is for other game. These two species of canines, however, comprise but a very small portion of the dogs of South-western Asia. It is a fact, both singular in itself, and illustrative of the limits of the influence exerted by those who have ruled the human mind with most despotic sway, that although Mohammed once doomed the entire canine race to destruction, and subsequently made an exception in favor of hunting-dogs alone, yet there is no portion of the world in which dogs are more numerous, or are treated, on the whole, with more "personal consideration," than where the Muslim religion prevails.

The common dog of Turkey is of every imaginable size, color, form, and breed, including the rejected shepherd-dog and homeless greyhound, as well as a race of curs which seem to be but half-domesticated wolves and jackals. They have taken

* Gen. xlix., 27; Ezek. xxii., 27; Matt. vii., 15; Acts xx., 29.
† Luke x., 3; Isa. xi., 6.

possession of the entire country to devour its offal, and consume the carcass of every dead creature; and though their operations are limited to the city, village, or hamlet, not omitting the solitary farm-house and flour-mill, yet so keen is their scent, that not a mule, horse, or camel can perish upon the highway, except in uninhabited districts, without at least half a dozen of these hungry customers immediately appearing on the ground, ready to commence operations.* They reconcile the population to their homely and often annoying presence by saving them the trouble of removing their refuse and garbage beyond the street door, and by practicing a system of police which gives public notice of the movements of every stranger. Every street and neighborhood seems to be apportioned by common consent to a particular pack of curs, which enjoys, as a perquisite, all its refuse matter, and is expected to perform the duty of defending its inhabitants against "all comers," both by barking and biting. Within their own domain they feel perfectly at home, entering the houses and courts, or lying down in the middle of the street with the expectation that every passer-by will turn out for them. But as soon as they go beyond their limits, they become guilty of trespass, and are set upon by all the dogs of the adjoining district. Should a strange dog, however, pass through the streets, all such limits are forgotten in a general attack of the entire canine population upon the daring intruder. At night their barking is unceasing, and they respond to each other's cry as if to show that they are on the alert.† Should a belated traveler enter the town, his progress through the streets can be certainly known by the furious barking that salutes him as he proceeds.

In all the smaller towns and villages, where there is no police, a beast of burden dying in the street is left to be devoured by the dogs, which is very shortly accomplished; elsewhere it is simply dragged to the nearest dunghill. Sheep and goats are often slaughtered in the street, and the blood is licked up by the dogs.‡ Drunken strangers, reeling homeward late in the night, have been overpowered by them, and devoured before morning;§ and when the town has been invaded by an

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* Jer. xv., 3.

† Psa. lix., 6.

‡ 1 Kings xxi., 19; xxii., 38; Psa. lxviii., 23.

§ 2 Kings ix., 35, 36.

enemy, these same hungry brutes first feed upon the dead bodies in the street, and then enter the very houses to search for more.*

The people regard the common street dog both as a nuisance and a necessity. They at times curse him, throw stones at him, and attack him with a stick;† and one can see lying about a butcher's stall curs of every size that have been cruelly wounded or maimed by his axe or knife, while, on the other hand, this very butcher finds it convenient to cast out to them all the refuse of his shop. The housewife, standing at her door, calls them to consume the remains of the family meal which she scrapes out of her copper saucepan. She even encourages a particular favorite to lie down beside the door, or in a corner of her yard. Wealthy Muslims often leave, at their death, large sums of money to be used in the daily distribution of food to the dogs, and these may be seen flocking in large numbers from considerable distances at the appointed hour. Such a legacy is doubtless expected to be put down at the judgment on the credit side of the miscreant's account, who gives to the dogs what he robbed from the poor. The Muslims make it, in some sort, criminal to kill a dog, though superannuated or diseased, or to destroy a litter of pups that have accidentally lost their mother; so they are left to die a lingering death by hunger. Some years ago, the dogs of Tophaneh, at Constantinople, had become so numerous as to be declared by all an intolerable nuisance. Poison and other remedies were proposed, but the Ulemas pronounced them unlawful. Finally, in accordance with their advice, a vessel of considerable size was chartered, and hundreds of dogs were enticed on board. It sailed to one of the rocky, desert islands of the Marmora, where the unsuspecting canines were landed; a feast was spread before them, and the ship departed, leaving them to their fate. It was deemed no impropriety thus to abandon the poor brutes to perish by hunger, or fall to devouring one another.

The foregoing statements explain the apparent discrepancy which readers of the Scriptures can not fail to have noticed between the toleration and employment of this animal by the Hebrews, and the terms of contempt in which they often speak

* 1 Kings xiv., 11.

† 1 Sam. xvii., 43.

of him. They used him as a watch, and to guard their flocks,* and at the same time the term "dog" was as much an expression of contempt as it now is throughout Western Asia.† The true explanation for what appears to Occidentals a very unaccountable ill-treatment, as well as an excessive toleration of this useful animal, is to be found in the universally prevalent idea of uncleanness produced by his touch. Even the sportsman and the shepherd, who would not part with his dog on any consideration, never pets him, but keeps him at a distance; and this feeling prevails, not among the devout or superstitious alone, but with free-thinkers and the irreligious as well.‡ It may perhaps be partly accounted for by his scavenger propensities and habits; but he is also regarded as the type of lewdness, which in the Armenian tongue is called *shnootune*, from *shoon*, a dog.§

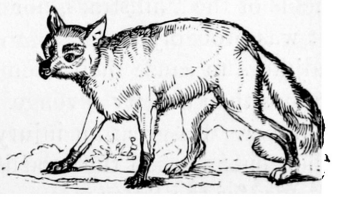
The jackal and the fox were called in Hebrew by one and the same name, "shual," which denotes a burrowing animal.‖ This is not strange, for the Scriptures do not contain a system of natural history; they simply call things by the names used among the people whom they address, in order to instruct them upon matters of much greater importance. We have already pointed out the fact that the term *leviathan* is used in a generic sense, to denote several creatures which have very little in common. The jackal and the fox, however, in many respects resemble each other, so that they are easily mistaken the one for the other by an unpracticed eye. They both burrow in the ground, and their holes can not be told apart. They also alike frequent old ruins. We have started up the jackal amidst the fallen temples of Baalbec and other remains of antiquity, and have repeatedly spied the fox running along the top of an old wall.¶ They are the same reddish-fawn color, and do not differ in size, but the jackal has much longer legs, so that he stands higher, while his tail is but half the size of the fox's brush; he has, moreover, nothing of Reynard's sleek and sly appearance. The fur of the latter is an important article of commerce, being used in all parts of the country for lining winter garments, while the skin of the jackal is worthless.

* Isa. lvi., 10; Job xxx., 1.
† 1 Sam. xxiv., 14; 2 Kings viii., 13.
‡ Lane, i., p. 120.
§ Deut. xxiii., 18; Rev. xxii., 15.
‖ Matt. viii., 20.
¶ Neh. iv., 3; Lam. v., 18.

Again, the jackal is gregarious, while the fox is solitary. The former seems to be confined to the vicinity of the sea, for he exists along the whole coast of Asia Minor, from Batoom round to Alexandretta, and down the coast of Palestine to Egypt; but we have never met him more than fifty miles from the shore; this does not, however, apply to Mesopotamia, for he is found in considerable numbers near Mossul. Reynard also abounds in the same localities, but completely displaces the jackal farther inland, where he greatly abounds.



Jackal.



Syrian Fox.

The jackal is a dirty animal, which prefers carrion to any other food, and often displays great cunning in securing it. Between him and the dogs there is a standing feud; they are too strong for him, and to cope with them he is obliged to outwit them. Soon after sunset he creeps out of his hole, and utters a few plaintive yelps, which are answered by a similar cry, and then by another, in rapidly increasing succession, until they swell to one grand chorus of doleful sounds. These cries are signals which bring them together at some convenient spot, where a consultation seems to be held respecting the plan of operations for the night. The dogs, meantime, have rushed in the direction of the jackals' cry, and have set up a loud barking in opposition, thus distinctly revealing their whereabouts. They are kept on the alert, and at a distance from the carrion, by the jackals setting up from time to time their chorus; these all the while, each in his turn, silently and slyly slip away, to take a share of the coveted feast. They play the same game in order to get at the grapes, of which they are excessively fond; and vineyards which are at a considerable distance from a village require a constant watch and guard

during the fruit season, or they are completely devoured by the jackals.*

This animal is rarely shot by the hunter, but he is sometimes caught in traps,† and is considered untamable. The Scriptural account of the expedient, by means of which Samson inflicted such severe injury upon the Philistines, is generally supposed to contain difficulties which do not seem to us to exist in point of fact. We should bear in mind that Samson was the chief magistrate of the Israelites, so that there could be no difficulty in the way of his collecting a very large number of these animals, even within a very short time, if necessary; but we need not suppose that the jackals were all let loose *at once* in the fields of the Philistines, nor in the same part of their territory. It was probably an attempt on the part of Samson and his coadjutors to cause their enemies to suffer the horrors of famine rather than a petty revenge, which would affect only a limited number. So great an injury could not have been inflicted on their enemies had the Israelites fired their crops with their own hands, for the latter were confined to the hill country by their more powerful enemies; and even had they partially succeeded, the damage done would have been limited in extent. The plan of tying the tails of two jackals together was certainly a most effectual means of attaining the object, as any one will testify who has ever seen the experiment tried. A single animal carrying a fire-brand would soon extinguish it, while two would not only be impeded in their progress, but would find no hole sufficiently large to admit them both at once; and so would continue rushing wildly through the land, setting fire to the sheaves of wheat and also to that still standing, together with the vineyards and the olives; the Philistines, moreover, would find it impossible to seize the authors of the terrible mischief. These fire-brands were doubtless pieces of the pitch-pine of the country, which, once lighted, are put out with difficulty.

Some have claimed that jackals did not exist in Bible times, and are not referred to in the Scriptures; they suppose that these animals came from India, and appeared in Western Asia after the commencement of the Christian era. Such a state-

* Cant. ii., 15. † Judg. xv., 4.

ment, however, is not only extremely improbable, and without a parallel in natural history, but is quite incorrect, at least as far as regards the Old Testament; for the word *ayïm* (howlers), improperly rendered "wild beasts of the islands" in Isa. xiii., 22, and Jer. l., 39, is supposed to refer distinctly to troops of jackals; while *shual* and *shualim* are employed indiscriminately to indicate either jackals or foxes. *Aÿ* or *aoo* is an exact imitation of the cry of the former.

The number of these animals depends upon the amount of food afforded by the district they frequent; so that the Palestine of to-day does not probably contain as many of them as did the Palestine of the Hebrew judges. We have ourselves, in Syria, listened to the startling midnight chorus of bands of jackals, whose numbers could not have fallen far short of Samson's instruments of revenge. As they are most fond of carrion, however, they greatly increase in times of war. Thus David, speaking of his unrighteous enemies, says: "They shall fall by the sword; they shall be a portion for foxes"—read jackals; for the latter come in troops to devour the dead, while the solitary fox prefers to kill his own prey.*

Jackals are, we believe, more numerous in their own district than are foxes where *they* most abound; yet of the numbers of the latter some estimate may be formed from the fact that, in the outskirts of a single town in Asia Minor, no less than three hundred foxes were shot during a single fortnight, when a slight fall of snow covered the ground, and enabled the sportsmen to distinguish them in the darkness of the night.

The fox is also distinctly alluded to in the Scriptures, and our Saviour evidently compares Herod to this animal.† He is still considered to be the type of cunning; and the Eastern proverbs and fables which have Master Reynard for their theme represent him as characterized by the same traits as do those of Western lands.

Fable itself, so far as it endows the brute creation with the power of speech, appears to have been originally an Oriental conceit, arising from an idea, still prevalent among all classes, that both animals and birds are able to communicate their ideas as intelligibly as man. This is seen in the stories similar

* Psa. lxiii., 10.

† Luke xiii., 32.

to the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," which the people are accustomed to recount, bearing many of them the impress of a high antiquity, and is also noticeable in the expressions they habitually employ respecting the brutes. But the tales told of the fox among the people of the East differ from those current in Western lands in this respect, namely, that the former invariably represent him as finally outwitted in spite of all his wiles, while the latter ever bring him out successful. There are, for instance, many stories of the fox and the magpie, in which the latter is sure to get the best of it. The European fable of the race between the hare and the tortoise is with Orientals a race between the fox and the crab, in which the latter held on to Reynard's tail, and cried out "tally" as soon as they arrived at the goal, thus winning the race by ten seconds; the decision pending on the result of this trial of speed, in accordance with the sly proposition of Reynard himself, was as to which of them should have the wheat and which the chaff of the crop they had raised in partnership.

The red-legged partridge is considered a very silly bird, and very proud of her song. The following may be taken as a specimen of the stories told at the expense of Master Reynard by the Oriental farmers, upon whom he retaliates by stealing their chickens: A partridge sat singing on the top of a rock, when a fox, slyly creeping up, feigned to be greatly charmed with her song. When within a few feet of her, he exclaimed, "I don't believe you could sing so delightfully with your eyes shut." "Oh! yes, I could," answered the silly bird; and, closing her eyes, she was the next moment in the fox's mouth. "Well, you've got me now!" she exclaimed; "but you must acknowledge you do not often feed on so dainty a morsel; you should at least give thanks to God for it." The fox just opened his mouth to say, "Praise be to God," when the partridge, uttering her well-known chuckle, flew away.

The mouse designates a number of small animals which do not seem to have been distinguished by specific names among the Hebrews, for their word "*akh-bar*" signifies *corn-devourer*, and is applicable to a variety of rodents inhabiting both the house and the field. We shall notice several of these animals, without confining ourselves to those which may be strictly considered as coming under the designation of scavengers.

This seems essential to the completeness of our picture of Bible lands.

No one can have dwelt long in Western Asia without remarking the important place occupied by the house-rats in the economy of nature. They are silent during the day, and seem to lie asleep in their holes; but no sooner has the sun gone down than they come out in search of food. The dog carries off the more bulky and coarse refuse of the town, but the rats eat every thing. They grow to such a size, and move about in such large numbers, that cats uniformly avoid them. Not content with the depredations they commit in the cellar, basement, and yard, they go higher, and, piercing every floor, ransack the house from garret to cellar; they invade cupboards and closets, devour or carry off whatever is left exposed, and sometimes attack the fingers, toes, and faces of little children in their beds. In districts where the houses are built of wood, time alone can accustom the inhabitants to endure the noise they make at night gnawing holes through the floors, running up and down in the partition-walls, or ranging over the garret; and when the building is large and old the roof becomes haunted by weasels, which pursue the rats all night long, adding to the racket the piercing squeals of the combatants, to the no small discomfort of any unaccustomed guest. Every housewife has her own story to tell of the depredations and feats of these voracious and impudent scavengers; and we have often been amazed, not only at their incessant activity and voracity, but still more at the wonderful ingenuity they display in accomplishing their object. We have known them, for instance, to carry off unbroken several eggs from the top of a shelf up a high, straight wall to a hole in the ceiling above. This was accomplished by one of them lying down on his back, and clasping the eggs, each in turn, with his four feet, when the other rats, seizing him by the tail, hauled him up the wall and through the hole. This is the animal called by naturalists the *brown rat*, which multiplies with such amazing rapidity that, were it not for its numerous foes, a single pair would increase to nearly a thousand individuals in one year. This animal is supposed to have originated in Persia, and to have spread throughout Western Asia, from whose shores it swam to the shipping bound to foreign parts, and thus invaded

Europe, making its appearance in Paris in the eighteenth century.

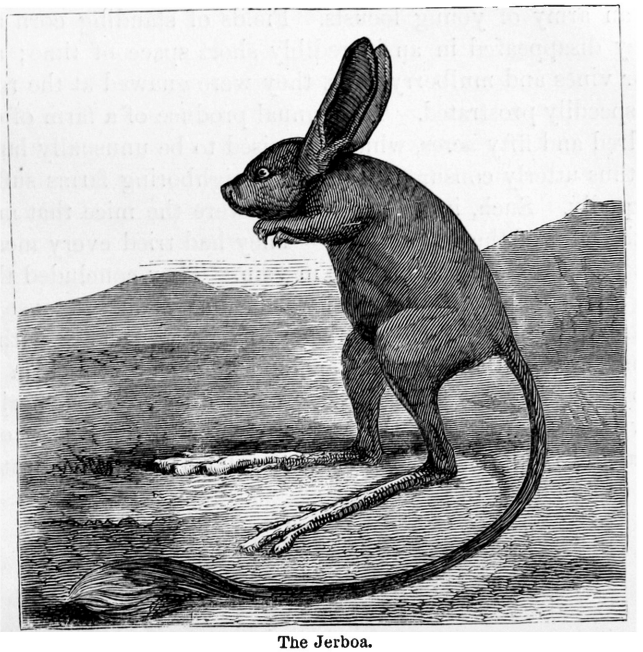
It is interesting to notice that as long as the bulk of mankind were massed in the oldest provinces of Asia this animal was confined to that continent; but when devastating wars had diminished the number of its inhabitants, and Europe became the favorite abode of men, the rat emigrated westward, and made the capitals of civilization the centre of its operations. There seems also to have been a similar emigration eastward into the crowded provinces of China.

The mouse is also extremely common in Western Asia, and the Mosaic prohibition of its flesh continues to be generally observed.* We should not, however, wonder at the necessity of such a prohibition, nor be surprised at the statement contained in Isa. lxvi., 17. We have reason to believe that those who have tasted the flesh of the mouse acquire as great a relish for it, as the Frenchman does for his frog diet, or the German for *sauerkraut*. We once had a servant from one of the Greek islands who was addicted to this habit, and could be induced to relinquish it neither by expostulation nor by ridicule. The only class in Turkey now who habitually eat the mouse are the gypsies, and they make no secret of it.

The only kind of squirrel known in this country is about the size of a common rat, and of a reddish-fawn color, with a line of brown commencing between the ears and running down the back. They are usually found upon walnut-trees or in their vicinity, and are not generally eaten. The jerboa is a miniature kangaroo, or a squirrel upon stilts. It is a beautiful little creature, closely resembling the common squirrel of the country, but has very long hind-legs, that enable it to take great leaps, with the aid of its long and powerful tail, which is covered with short hair, and terminates in a delicate fan-like tuft. Its ears are very long and diaphanous, and its eyes large. It is extremely timid, and leaps away at the slightest appearance of danger. This curious and interesting little animal exists in Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, and Northern Africa. It appears to be nowhere found in large numbers, and is eaten by the Arabs of the desert.

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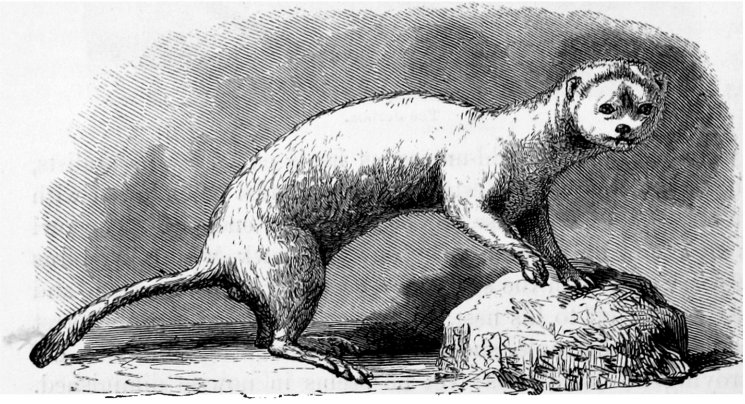
* Lev. xi., 29.



The Jerboa.

The short-tailed field-mouse, as he is called by naturalists, abounds throughout Western Asia, and must be endowed with great powers of increase, for he has many enemies. The owl is after him by night, and by day the hawk, with other birds of prey, flutters in the sky, and comes down with a swoop, and carries him off to his nest, while the indefatigable little ferret creeps into his hole, successfully encountering him, and destroying his little ones; yet he seems in nowise diminished. You see him in all the arable lands, running across the fields, industriously carrying off the grain to stow it away for winter, chirping gayly from time to time, sitting up on his haunches to get a good sight of you as you approach, and then suddenly diving into his hole. This animal is apt so greatly to multiply as at times to cause a sensible diminution of the crops, and its ravages are more generally dreaded than those of the mole. A perfectly trustworthy friend has informed us that in 1863, being on the farm (*chiflik*) of an acquaintance in Western Asia Minor, he saw about noon the depredations committed by an immense number of these mice, which passed over the ground

like an army of young locusts. Fields of standing corn and barley disappeared in an incredibly short space of time; and as for vines and mulberry-trees, they were gnawed at the roots and speedily prostrated. The annual produce of a farm of one hundred and fifty acres, which promised to be unusually large, was thus utterly consumed; and the neighboring farms suffered equally. Such, in all probability, were the mice that marred the land of the Philistines.* They had tried every means to check their devastations, but in vain. They concluded that "the hand of the God of Israel was against them," because of "the ark" which they had taken; and in accordance with a custom prevalent among idolaters, and inherited from them by the papists, they sought to appease him with a trespass-offering of five golden images of the instruments of their scourge, one for each of the lords, or sheikhs, of the states which constituted their commonwealth.†



The Ferret.

It is either the field-mouse or the Persian rat which committed such ravages in Palestine about the year 1132 as are described by the historians of the Crusades. They are said to have been so ravenous "as to climb on the backs of the cattle and begin to eat their flesh!"‡

* 1 Sam. vi., 5. † 1 Sam. vi., 4.

‡ Michaud, "Histoire des Croisades," vol. i., p. 337, note.

CHAPTER XI.

BIRDS OF PASSAGE.

We have often been struck with the great numbers of birds, particularly of the smaller species, which inhabit Western Asia, as compared with Europe and North America. We have so often made this observation upon the three continents, that it seems to be a fact settled beyond a doubt. The most natural explanation of this circumstance lies in the fact that the feathered tribe, even those of feeblest wing, have an easy road from Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia, by the Isthmus of Suez, and over the narrow Red Sea, to their winter-quarters in tropical Africa, while nature has provided them with extraordinary means of conveyance from Asia Minor southward across the Mediterranean, which will presently be described.

But there are many birds, even of small size, whose strong wing enables them to disregard distance and other impediments in the way, and this is pre-eminently true of the swallow, which abounds in all parts of Western Asia. There are several species of this bird, some of which inhabit the crags and caves of the mountains, while others frequent the banks of streams; but we shall notice here only the common swallow, which chiefly haunts the abodes of men. These birds are freely admitted everywhere, and not only make their nests against the ceilings of balconies, halls, and private apartments, but find their way into the grated windows of the Christian churches and mosks, and rear their young unmolested in tombs and houses of prayer.* In this passage, the words "hath found a nest" refer to the fact that the swallow uses the same nest year after year, only repairing it; and it is worthy of note that both the swallow and the sparrow may still be seen fluttering and rearing their broods about the so-called Mosk of Omar in Jerusalem, as well as the buildings which occupy the

* Psa. lxxxiv., 3.



Oriental Swallows and Nest. (Psa. lxxxiv., 3.)

site of Solomon's Temple. In all these haunts the cheerful twittering of the swallows may be heard, as they occasionally stop to rest in the midst of their family cares. There is also a plaintiveness in their chattering (referred to in Isa. xxxviii., 14) like the sobbing of a little child. They are busy all summer long rearing their two successive broods, flitting and darting in all directions, collecting materials for their nests, or food for their progeny.

Whither do they go when they disappear in the autumn? One species lies dormant in crags and holes during the winter; but nearly all, and particularly the kind just described, are well known to fly away to milder climes. They return every spring with unerring instinct to the same nest, as we have ourselves proved by tying a scarlet thread to the leg of one of them.* We were once becalmed in the spring season on board a sailing ship between the island of Malta and the African coast. Great numbers of swallows alighted on the vessel, arriving

* Jer. viii., 7.

from the south, and when they left us, flew to the north. They seemed glad of rest, and some of them fluttered about the deck in the most familiar manner, even entering the cabin, probably in quest of flies to appease their hunger. Some hawks and wild pigeons also alighted in the rigging, all bound in the same direction. We easily caught several of these weary swallows, and gave them their liberty again. A lad of our company was standing at the stern of the ship with a swallow upon his finger, when a hawk darted down, swift as a shot, from the mast-head, caught the bird off from his hand, and, flying back to the rigging, began to devour it. We boys on board (for I was then but a lad) appealed to the sailors against this wanton cruelty, as we regarded it, and one kind-hearted tar sprang into the rigging, crept cautiously toward the weary bird, and caught him with his hand; the swallow's severed head was in his mouth, and the body in his talons. A fellow-sailor meanwhile had in like manner seized another hawk; and then, to gratify our boyish sense of justice, they fastened the foot of one hawk to that of the other with a string only a few inches in length, and tossed them into the air. Though in so awkward a plight, each alternately rising or falling, yet they flew with amazing rapidity toward Africa, probably on account of its being either the nearest or the most familiar shore, and were soon quite lost to sight.

Both the sparrow-hawk and several species of wild pigeon have migratory habits, and we can easily conceive that they can cross over from Egypt into Asia Minor. The incident related above proves that the swallow in like manner, and many other birds of similar powers of flight, need not follow the circuit of the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, but are able to cross over its entire breadth, especially by taking advantage of a favorable wind. But many birds are quite incapable of flying over a surface of three hundred and fifty miles from headland to headland across the Mediterranean, without alighting, and would require many days, and even weeks, to perform the trip through Syria and Palestine. Such are, for instance, the ortolans, the darnagas, the bec-figs of various species, the wren, the titmouse, the smaller thrushes and finches, with a hundred other diminutive specimens of the feathered tribes. These, after breeding in the spring and early summer, feed in the

vineyards and olive-yards, crowd about the terebinth-trees, and pick up all kinds of seeds and insects in the fields; and as the severity of the winter would be fatal to them, not only in Asia Minor, but even in Syria and Palestine, He who is ever mindful of the smallest of his creatures has provided them with means of transportation to a more genial clime. Many of them, indeed, find their way downward from Palestine into Arabia and Egypt, but this would be difficult, if not impossible, where lofty mountains and broad seas intervene; and to meet such cases the crane has been provided. This is a large bird with long neck and legs, whose body is of a bluish slate color, while the wings are black. It is gregarious, keeping together in companies of twenty to one hundred in number; it feeds in swampy grounds, away from human habitations, and is very shy and wary. A few of these birds remain the year round in the same locality, choosing an extensive marsh, whose position enables them to perceive the approach of an enemy. Most of them, however, are migratory. In the autumn, numerous flocks may be seen coming from the north with the first cold blasts from that quarter, flying low, and uttering a peculiar cry as if of alarm, as they circle over the cultivated plains. Little birds of every species may then be seen flying up to them, while the twittering songs of those already comfortably settled upon their backs may be distinctly heard. On their return in the spring, they fly high, apparently considering that their little passengers can easily find their way down to the earth.



The Crane. (Jer. viii., 7.)

The cranes do not fly in a single straight line, like wild geese or ducks, but in forked lines, and the leader may occasionally be

seen falling back to the rear, his place being taken by the next bird in the line. When they first rise in the air from their camping-ground, they fly about in the greatest confusion, like a caravan of camels or mules preparing for a start; but they soon fall into line, and proceed more regularly than a caravan which threads its way across the desert. The crane was known to the Hebrews, and the regularity of its migrations had attracted their notice, though their country lay in the pathway of but a small number of these birds.*

Most species of the birds of passage may be able to perform their own migrations;† and we shall now proceed to mention the chief of those referred to in the Scriptures or particularly characteristic of the country.

The sparrow is generally supposed to be stationary, though its diminished numbers in the winter would lead to the inference that it is partially migratory. There can be no truer picture than the Psalmist's description of the sparrows "on the house-tops,‡ whose edge is ever their favorite station. There they sit, or hop about and chirp, sharpen their little bills, or carry on their little quarrels; and when the coast is clear in the yard below down they fly in a body, to pick up any crumbs or scraps of food they may chance to find. We often thought in childhood that the solitary sparrow, so frequently seen in winter alone on the house-top, must feel very sad, bereft as he seemed to be of its garrulous and merry companions; others have made the same observation, and the Psalmist's words cited above are of a similar tenor, for, despite the suggestions of some commentators, the statement is applicable to no other bird in Palestine.

Sparrows, as well as swallows, are allowed to build their nests about the house; and being stronger than the swallow, often take forcible possession of its nest, ruthlessly casting out its unhatched eggs. As soon, however, as the crops begin to ripen in the fields, they leave the habitations of men, and seek more abundant food among the standing grain. They hover,

* Jer. viii., 7.

† In the islands of South-eastern Asia, "we learn that an arm of the sea, twenty-five miles wide, serves to limit the range even of birds of considerable powers of flight."—WALLACE, "Malay Archipelago," p. 324.

‡ Psa. cii., 7.

like little clouds, over the fields of wheat, barley, millet, and sesame-seed, and settle down more especially on the trees and bushes which adjoin the threshing-floors. About sunset hundreds of them collect in the dense old cypress-trees, and it takes them some time to settle their disputes about their roosts and sleeping-quarters. The farmers reckon the sparrow as one of the chief enemies of their crops, and it not unfrequently happens that these voracious little thieves leave barely enough to pay the government taxes.

Sparrows are caught for the market, mostly by children, either by means of little cages whose doors close with a spring, or with twigs besmeared with bird-lime placed among the branches of trees. They are sold at the smallest price fetched by any game.* A comparison of these two passages recalls the custom, still universal in the East, of throwing in something extra in consideration of a larger purchase. It is also interesting to note that the sparrow was the smallest living creature offered in sacrifice under the Mosaic dispensation. It was the cleansed leper who, having been separated from his people as unclean, and thus usually reduced to great penury, was allowed to bring an offering of so little value.†

The quail does not appear much larger than the sparrow, but its body is fuller and rounder. It closely resembles the partridge in its general form and shape, and its flesh is highly esteemed. These birds are migratory, and move in immense numbers, often amounting to several thousands. They begin to leave Africa in the early spring, and breed on the elevated plains of Asia Minor, Koordistan, European Turkey, and Southern Russia. Their peculiar whistle may be heard all summer long, in the midst of the sown wheat or barley, and so actively do they lead about their little broods that their enemies can rarely seize them. In the autumn, about the 1st of September, they begin to migrate southward. They are then very numerous, and rise like a cloud from the fields, pursuing their flight only in the night with a favorable wind, and alighting



The Oriental Quail. (Psa. cv., 40.)

* Matt. x., 29; Luke xii., 6.

† Lev. xiv., 4.

from time to time for rest and food. They may occasionally be seen after sunset, and before it is quite dark, passing as a cloud in the sky. When crossing over any considerable expanse of water, they always make for a particular headland, unless driven to some other point by a change of wind; for their wings and tails being very short, quails can simply keep before the breeze. They are also guided by certain landmarks in their progress overland. The people light fires by night on the summit of the passes in the mountains over which they are known to fly, so that the birds, attracted by the light, descend and fall into their hands. But they are most easily captured when they first alight upon the shore after crossing the Black Sea or the Mediterranean. They are then sought for in the night with lanterns held near the ground, and the weary birds, running toward the light, are easily caught with the hand and thrust into bags. Indeed the immense numbers annually captured in a variety of ways, or shot for food, can not fall far short of those of the herrings caught in the Northern seas. But few of these birds probably pass *directly* over from Asia Minor to Africa; many stop on their way at the islands of Rhodes and Cyprus, and still larger numbers pass over Syria and Palestine, and cross the Red Sea, to winter in Upper Egypt and Nubia.

The quails which came up and covered the camp of the Israelites, while pitched in the desert of Sin, with high mountains on the east and north, doubtless came over the Red Sea from the south, following their spring migration, and alighting to rest upon the shore, before attemping to pass over the mountains, in their progress toward the north.* One year and seven days later the Israelites were again fed with quails; but no reader of the Bible account can avoid the conviction that there was something unusual and extraordinary in this instance which did not characterize the former.† The tents of Israel did not now lie on the sea-shore, where the quails stop in large numbers before taking their nightly flight over the mountains; they were pitched to the east of Sinai, near the upper end of a valley where their camping-ground is still marked by the fountain and palm-trees of *el Huderah* (Hazeroth). Had the Israelites been encamped upon any of the regular

* Exod. xvi., 13. † Numb. xi.

routes of the quails, Moses and many of his people could not have failed to be aware of the fact, which was not the case.* The chief agent employed in bringing about an anomaly in the present case, in the flight of these birds, is distinctly stated to have been a powerful wind, called in Psa. lxxviii., 26, "an east wind and a south wind." It was a "khamasin"† of extraordinary violence that prevented their passing over the high mountains of the peninsula, in their progress northward, and compelled them to fly low, on its eastern side, over the plain of the Muzeïny as far as *Aïn el Huderah*, where their farther progress was arrested by the closing in of the valley, and by the wind which, striking the spurs of the *Jebl et Tih*, became an "east wind."‡ They here fluttered no higher than two cubits from the ground over the space of a day's journey in length and breadth, and were caught in vast numbers by the Israelites. The expression "two cubits high upon the face of the earth" does not, in our view, imply that the birds were heaped upon the ground to the height of three feet, for then the words, "he that gathered least, gathered ten homers," would be quite inadequate to convey an idea of their numbers. The disease consequent upon these events was perhaps the effect of decomposition by the sirocco of thousands of these birds that could not be collected, and died from lack of food and water within the space in which they were confined in such vast numbers; or their flesh may have become poisonous by their feeding upon certain plants still existing in Upper Egypt, from whence they came, which produce such an effect.

Lynch repeatedly found quails§ on the shore and floating upon the water of the Dead Sea, on the last days of April; and he gives an interesting account of the extraordinary workings of the sirocco, or "khamasin," among the surrounding mountains.

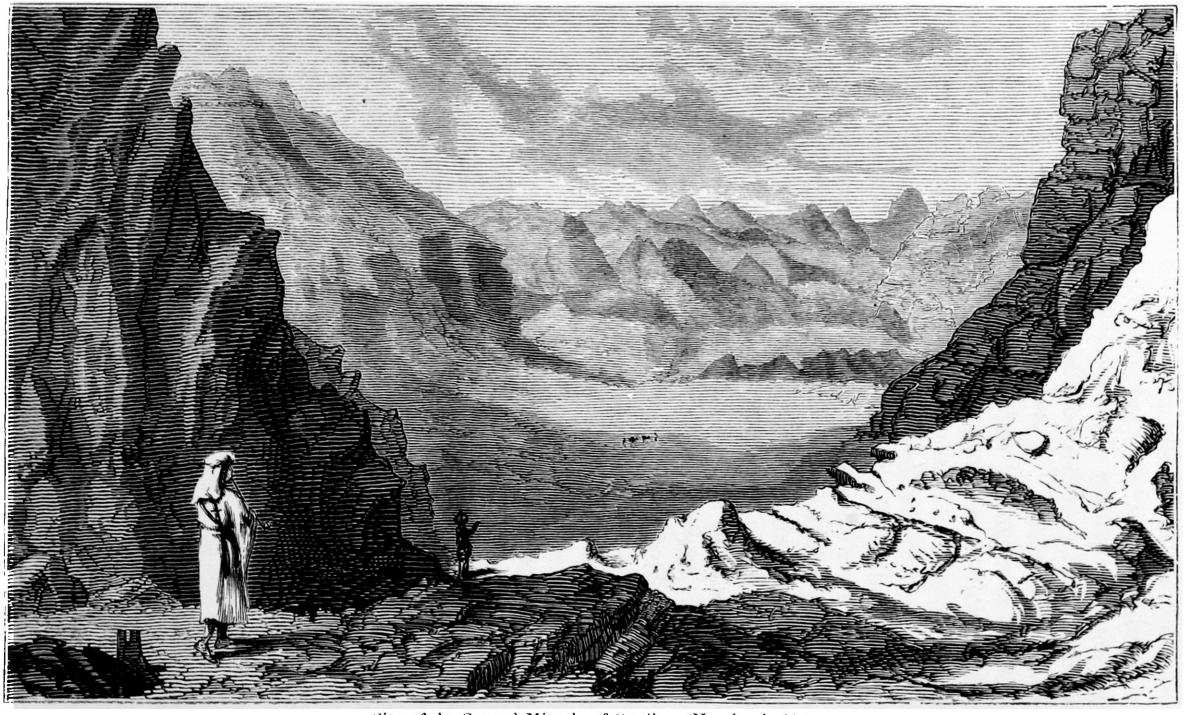
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* Numb. xi., 21, 22.

† This is the name of the south-west wind which blows more or less during the *fifty days* (as its name indicates) from the time of the Oriental Easter to the Day of Pentecost—during which period occurred the two great flights of quails spoken of in the text—a twelvemonth apart.—LANE, "Modern Egyptians," vol. ii., p. 222.

‡ Robinson, vol. i., p. 151.

§ He took these quails for young birds, doubtless because he was only acquainted with the American species, which is larger. As the Eastern quail is born in July, it has obtained its full growth in the month of April.



Site of the Second Miracle of Quails. (Numb. xi., 31.)

Since writing the foregoing suggestions respecting the miraculous fall of quails in the second year of the Israelites' sojourn in the wilderness, we have seen a drawing of the *Aïn Huderah* (Hazeroth) in Palmer's "Desert of the Exodus," page 214, which so aptly explains our idea of the matter that we here reproduce it, together with the following quotation from that valuable work: "Through a deep and rugged gorge, with almost perpendicular sides, we looked down upon a *wady* bed that winds along between fantastic sandstone rocks, now rising in the semblance of mighty walls or terraced palaces, now jutting out in pointed ridges—rocky promontories on a sandy sea. In the midst, beneath a lofty cliff, nestles the dark green palm-grove of Hazeroth.* The fountain itself issues from the rock behind the grove." The author makes no reference to the quails, which renders his testimony all the more valuable.

One of the most common birds of passage which mark the seasons by their regular migrations, is the turtle-dove, repeatedly referred to in the Scriptures.† That it was common among the Hebrews, is proved by the fact that the poorer classes were permitted to offer, instead of a lamb, "two turtle-doves or two young pigeons," such as they were "able to get."‡

The dove includes two classes of birds, the pigeon and the turtle-dove. The former are always blue, with touches of white, or black and silvery, or even golden hues, according to the species.§ There is the wood-pigeon, twice the size of the common; the rock-pigeon, which builds its nest in natural caves,‖ and in old dried-up wells and cisterns, and the half-tamed pigeon, which breeds in vast numbers in the "dove-cotes" erected on purpose for it in many of the towns and villages of Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and Persia.¶ This is the original stock from which has been derived a great variety of tame pigeons of every hue, and differing in other respects. Some of these have been brought from the East to Europe where they

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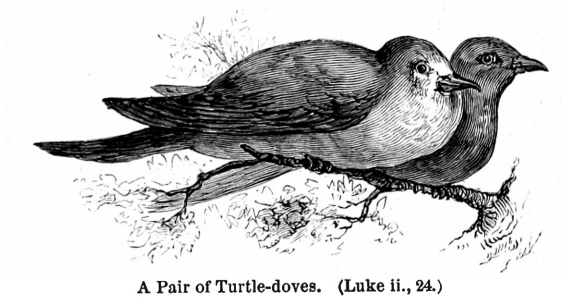
* The vale and fountain of Hazeroth may have been and may still be an occasional "camp" of the quails, when they go up the Gulf of Akaba. Stanley says that when he was there, "the sky was literally darkened by the flight of innumerable birds three feet high, with black and white wings" (storks?) "which he had seen in like numbers at the first cataract of the Nile."—"Sinai and Palestine," p. 82.

† Cant. ii., 12; Jer. viii., 7. ‡ Lev. xii., 8; xiv., 22.

§ Psa. lxviii., 13. ‖ Jer. xlviii., 28. ¶ Isa. lx., 8.

are well known and highly prized; as, for instance, the carrier-pigeon of Tarsus, the robber-pigeon, the tumbler, etc.*

The turtle-doves, too, are various, though less easily distinguished by their form and color. There is the palm-dove, which does not migrate like the rest, but builds its nest, often in large numbers, on the palm-trees, and was the variety doubtless accessible to the Israelites, during their wanderings in the wilderness. There is also another species, sometimes called the ring-dove, from the line of black and white encircling its throat; it does not migrate, but frequents unmolested the houses of the Muslims, and makes the shady cypress groves of the Turkish cemeteries resound with its plaintive cooing.†



A Pair of Turtle-doves. (Luke ii., 24.)

Its note resembles the pronunciation of the Greek words, Δέκα ὀκτῶ (eighteen); hence its name "thekokhtoora," which is associated with the following legend: A woman sent her daughter-in-law to the public oven with a number of loaves to be baked. When the daughter returned with the baking, her mother-in-law insisted that one loaf was missing, and fell to beating her most unmercifully. Some kind genius in pity interfered, and changed the persecuted daughter into a turtle-dove. She, still burdened with the memory of her former trials, continues to reiterate, "There were but *eighteen*."

The more common species of turtle-doves, however, come up from the South in the early spring, and gradually fill the whole land, not only of Palestine and Syria, but the whole peninsula of Asia Minor. Their mournful cooing may be heard, throughout the summer, in all the valleys and plains, particularly in the heat of the day, when large numbers of them

* Michaud, "Histoire des Croisades," vol. i., p. 197. † Ezek. vii., 16.

seek the refreshing shade of the trees, or early in the morning, and at night, when they resort to the rocks at the foot of the hills.* They come down into every field of standing grain, and flutter about the threshing-floors; they start from every spring and water-course,† the silvery rustle of their wings, and the clear line of white and black upon their tails, as they pass overhead, distinguishing them from every other bird. They consume the crops, and yet are general favorites; and few sportsmen shoot them, though their flesh is not unsavory. Large numbers, however, are caught upon the islands of the Archipelago during their autumnal migrations, and are pickled in vinegar and spices.

The words in Matt. x., 16, "harmless as doves," and the passage in Matt. iii., 16, where the Holy Ghost is represented as "descending like a dove," are not to be understood as referring to the turtle-dove, but to the pigeon, which is the meaning of the original; the latter is not only equally harmless and peaceful, but is also easily tamed, which is not the case with the other.

The nightingale and blackbird (*Merula*) are the chief song birds of Western Asia. The former, which is a small variety of thrush, reddish-brown in color, is migratory, and from early spring until the month of June its melodious warblings may be heard issuing from the thick shade of trees and shrubs by the river banks, and from the gardens and wooded glens; for this delightful songster, which is rarely successfully caged, feeds upon the little worms and insects which abound by the shady water-courses, and often builds its nest in the rose-bushes of the garden, sure of immunity in return for its welcome music.‡ It is especially in bright moonlight nights that the notes of these captivating singers are clearest and loudest, and they seem to vie with each other until the air vibrates with the liquid melody. We have often not only been kept awake by them for hours, but have felt constrained to go forth the better to enjoy the harmonious contest. The imitative name "bulbul" is applied in the East to all small birds of song, though primarily and *par excellence* to the nightingale. We have heard it given to the beautiful variegated little titmouse, whose curi-

* Isa. xxxviii., 14; lix., 11. † Cant. v., 12. ‡ Psa. civ., 10, 12.



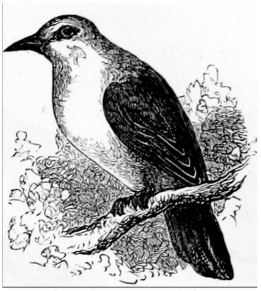
The Titmouse and its Nest.

ously constructed nest may often be seen hanging at the ends of the long willow-branches, swinging in the wind over the water of the streams.

The blackbird does not migrate. Its clearest and most cheerful note is heard at sunset of a cloudless day, when, perched on the topmost bough of a tall tree, or the summit of an isolated rock, it pours forth its far-resounding song.

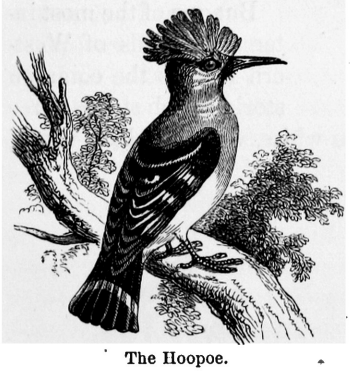
To the foregoing list might be added several birds of passage, which are familiarly known to the people: the oriole—the male of a bright yellow, with jet-black wings, and the female of a pale green—send forth their cheerful whistle as they flutter about the vineyards and the terebinth-trees, on their way to the high valleys among the mountains, where they build their nests in the walnut groves; the bee-bird (*Sirens*) of variegated plumage, green, red, and yellow, whose note is heard high up in the sky, quite out of sight, and which, descending like an arrow, passes close by in its fitful flight; the little blue-jay, which sits demurely upon the top of a grain stack, whence it flies noisily away; and the hoopoe, with its tall crest of red feathers tipped with black, which bows its head every time it utters its incessant "coo-cook." All these,

and many other interesting birds we might name, are and have ever been regular visitors of the lands of the Bible, and are familiarly known to all classes of the people, and equally admired and loved by all.



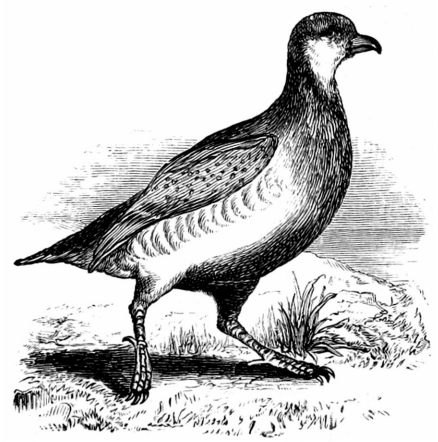
The Eastern Oriole.

The red-legged, or rock, partridge might well be classed among the warblers. It is, indeed, a larger bird than generally goes by that name; but it is kept in a cage simply for its song. In many villages of the island of Scio, many of these birds are yearly caught and exported to Constantinople, Smyrna, and other cities.* In Western Asia the only birds kept in cages for their song are the blackbird and the partridge, with the rare exception of a goldfinch. The gray, or European, partridge is only found in the plains of Asia Minor; but the rock partridge is very common throughout the land in a wild state. It is referred to in 1 Sam. xxvi., 20, and Jer. xvii., 11. The last of these passages alludes to the habit of this bird of building its nest upon the ground, in the grass, or under the hedge of a mountain vineyard, so exposed that the foxes, rats, or boys often carry away the eggs, an event by which the poor bird is greatly distressed. Were it not for this, however, and for its many enemies, this bird would so increase as to become a nuisance. As it is, the



The Hoopoe.

* We hear no more of the famous tame partridges of Scio, especially those of the villages of Ellata and Vassa, which "spend the day in the fields, and come home at night to the village: they follow the little boys to whom they belong, just like dogs, and fly from the village several times a day to search for their masters, each of whom keeps a whistle to call his own, and leads them out to feed; and they come whenever they hear the call." (Van Bruyn, p. 168; Thevenot, p. 100.) Too many travelers state the fact to doubt it in the main. We ourselves have long had a tame partridge running about in the house, which allowed the children to dress it up, and even to harness it to a little cart; but we never tried the experiment of taking it into the fields.



The Rock Partridge. (1 Sam. xxvi., 20.)

crops are, in some districts, materially diminished by them, and the farmers implore the sportsmen to come to their aid. We ourselves have seen several hundred at once, feeding like chickens in the fields, devouring the newly-sown wheat.

But one of the most interesting birds of Western Asia is the common stork, which stands three feet from the ground, is of a pure white, with jet-black wings, and with slender legs, and long bill of a bright red. This bird, especially the black variety, still makes the strong, spreading branches of the fir-tree her house;* but the Muslim notions of hospitality to bird and beast have encouraged her to build her broad, flat nest upon the roofs of houses and mosks, annually augmenting its height, until it resembles a little tower. The domes of village mosks are not unfrequently adorned with seven or eight of these unique appendages. Next to the swamp, the newly plowed field is the best harvest-ground of the stork. The plowmen may be seen accompanied by several of these birds stalking along close upon



The Stork and its Nest. (Jer. viii., 7.)

* Psa. civ., 17.

his heels, intent upon picking up the grubs and worms uncovered by the plowshare. They also render themselves very useful in destroying reptiles, locusts, and other insects, which they devour with great avidity. These birds utter no cry, but have a curious way of standing upon their nests, spreading their wings wide, and throwing back their heads so as to touch their backs, while they rapidly strike together the two mandibles of their great bills, thus producing a loud clatter not unlike the sound of castanets; they frequently do this, both by day and night, during all the time they are rearing their two annual broods, and we have often, when spending a night in a Turkish village, been long kept awake, though weary with travel, by this incessant noise. In Isa. xxxviii., 14, the word "crane" refers to the stork, and the sound above described is not inaptly rendered "chatter." By a reference to the *tahlil*, or peculiar cry of the Arab women, described farther on, this will be still better understood.

The stork has always enjoyed a high reputation for parental affection. We knew one of these birds whose young brood, happening to fall from the nest on the top of a tree, had been instantly killed by the village boys; she refused to forsake her desolate post, remaining till the cold came on, and was frozen to death by the winter blasts. In the autumn, when the time of their migrations arrives—for they winter in Egypt*—these birds may be seen flying up in great numbers, and describing large circles in the air. This is the signal that the day of departure has come, and the storks of the entire region obey the summons, speedily soaring upward to join their companions. So strong is this instinct that we remember a stork with broken wing, which had been the pet of a family, making a violent effort to join the company as they passed overhead, and losing its life in the attempt.

We once came upon a flock of these aërial pilgrims, as they were traveling toward their winter-quarters; they had alighted in a great plain, traversed by a broad river with extensive marshes upon its banks, where the storks were having a merry meal of frogs and smaller fry. We stood upon a high mound and, overlooking the speckled plain, counted the birds

* Maurice, Appendix, p. 119.

composing a single patch, and, using this as a standard of comparison, we estimated the whole number at between twenty-five and thirty thousand. In 1847 a gentleman residing in Beirut, Syria, informed us that during the preceding autumn a stork, accidentally injured, was captured in his garden, when a valuable jewel was found fastened on its leg, with a name and address upon it. He wrote a letter to the address in Germany, thereon inscribed, and received a reply to the effect that the bird had been taken from its nest when young, and in spite of the most lavish attentions from a nobleman's child, had flown away in the autumn, carrying off the jewel with which the little girl had adorned it.

The black stork also abounds in Palestine, principally in the Valley of the Jordan, and in the marsh of Lake Hooleh. This variety is distinguished from the other chiefly by its shyness and its fear of man. It uniformly builds its nest upon tall trees.

There are several other large birds that might be mentioned, which are met with in the lands of the Bible; such as the white, the blue, and the brown heron, the bittern, etc.* The pelican is a migratory bird, which appears in Western Asia only in the winter, spending the summer in the north of Russia. He is perfectly white, and resembles the swan at a distance, with the exception of his long bill, and a large pouch underneath, which answers the purpose of a net or bag for the fish he catches. These birds may often be seen sailing majestically in a line, like so many ships of war, on a river, or lake, or even out in the open sea.†

The ostrich was well known to the inhabitants of countries bordering upon the desert.‡ It is still found in the desert of Sinai.§ Muslims are fond of suspending its emptied eggs from the ceilings of their sacred edifices, as a sort of talisman.

Geese and ducks, both wild and domestic, abound in all parts of the country, and the swan, both white and gray, comes

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* Isa. xiv., 23.

† Isa. xxxiv., 11; "cormorant" here is *pelican* in the margin; see also Psa. cii., 6, where "wilderness," as usual, means tracts of uncultivated land, destitute of habitations. At the approach of man these unwieldy birds rise slowly into the air, considerably disturbing the surface of the water by the flapping of their wings.

‡ Job xxxix., 13; Lam. iv., 3. § Thevenot, p. 164.

down in the winter upon the inland lakes. In 1 Kings iv., 23, the words "fatted fowl" probably refer to tame geese. We need hardly add that the common domestic fowls are abundant in all parts of the country, for they probably originated in Asia, and were thence conveyed to more western lands.* Chickens continue to be artificially hatched in Egypt, as in the time of Herodotus, in ovens built under-ground, which contain six thousand eggs at a time.†

It is well known that the turkey, though now found wild in Circassia, was introduced into Europe from North America, about the year 1530, and has spread thence through the rest of the world.

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* Neh. v., 18; Matt. xxiii., 37; Mark xiii., 35. † Thevenot, p. 144.

CHAPTER XII.

REPTILES AND INSECTS OF BIBLE LANDS.

We shall speak of only a few of these, on account of their being mentioned in the Scriptures, or as peculiarly characteristic of the country.

Serpents are common in all parts of the land, as may, from frequent allusions, be inferred to have been the case in ancient times. Most of them are harmless, yet they are generally disliked and killed wherever met, by the followers of every religious system, with the exception of the Yezidies, of whose peculiar ideas upon this subject we shall speak in another place.

When killed, a serpent is usually hung up on the branch of a tree or a bush, across a low wall or a large stone, in order to avoid the possibility of startling any one, who, suddenly seeing it lying in the path, might suppose it to be alive. This indicates a general dread of the snake, probably occasioned by the fact that a few species are highly venomous, and by the sly and gliding movement of the creature.

There are, however, persons who capture and train serpents, even of the venomous sort, for exhibition. This is chiefly done in Egypt and India, where some men do nothing else but go about and show their snakes, not merely in a torpid state, but even dancing to the music of a flute; they even irritate the venomous reptile to the extent of biting, in order to demonstrate that they are proof against its poison. Some have explained these feats by supposing that the fangs have been removed, which does not, however, appear to be the case. At Bombay, in India, the celebration of the "Feast of the Snakes" presents the extraordinary spectacle of some three hundred "charmers," each bearing a basket with about twenty cobras, gathered in a Hindoo temple, where the creatures are fed with buffalo's milk, furnished by the superstitious people. The men handle them with perfect unconcern. Two or three thousand cobras are thus fed through the day; the next morning

the charmers carry away their serpents, and let them go into the jungle. This festival occurs in July, when these reptiles are most venomous.* A new suggestion upon this mysterious subject is contained in Cunningham's "Two Years in New South Wales." "There is," he says, "in the colony a person called the *snake man*, who is rarely without some of the most dangerous snakes coiled in his bosom or his hat: he destroys their inclination to bite by *shutting several together in a bag*."

There are few serpents in Western Asia larger than six feet in length, and even these are rare. We have heard a man relate his encounter with a monster whose head he claimed to be as large as that of a young dog, and which, pursuing him as he fled, felled him senseless to the ground with a single stroke of its tail. The story, however, lacked confirmation, and we considered it either an invention or an exaggeration, resulting from fright or some personal motive. The characteristic tales in the style of the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," with which people of all classes are wont to beguile their winter evenings, frequently make mention of land and sea serpents of stupendous length, and even furnished with powerful wings; and it is interesting to find that the ancients indulged in the same fancies, though there was as little foundation for them *then* as there is now. Such were doubtless the dragon and the griffin of the Greeks, as well as the sphinx of the Egyptians, and the various winged monsters of the Assyrians.

An Arabic proverb says: "Near the serpent spread thy bed; near the scorpion venture not;" and it is a fact fully corroborated by experience, that the serpent never bites without real or supposed provocation. A young man once applied to me for medicine on account of a violent attack of fever and ague, brought on by a singular incident. Being asleep on the ground in a vineyard, he was suddenly awakened by feeling the cold, clammy touch of a large snake gliding over his bare limbs. Though almost stupefied with terror, he had presence of mind enough to remain perfectly motionless till the creature, passing along the whole length of his body, and over his neck and face, finally glided harmlessly away.

The serpent has not the reputation of being "cunning" or

* L. Rousselet, "Tour du Monde, 1870-'71," p. 215.

"wise," nor are such characteristics suggested or sustained by any facts known in Western Asia. Nevertheless, its subtilty has passed into a proverb, doubtless by reason of the Mosaic account of the fall of our first parents;* and this is now as generally current among both Christians and Muslims as it was among the Hebrews in the days of our Lord.†

Venomous serpents are comparatively few in number, but their poison is deadly, and prompt in its action. Most of them belong to the general class of vipers, which includes both the asp and the adder.‡ The "fiery serpent" which destroyed so many of the Israelites in the wilderness, and was the occasion of a most impressive lesson respecting salvation through faith in a crucified Saviour, is supposed to be the cerastes, or the "*naïa hajy*" of the Arabs, whose bite is deadly, and occasions a burning sensation. Both these species are only found in the desert, and must, by some casual circumstance, have occurred in large numbers in the camping-ground of the Israelites. The "fiery flying serpent," mentioned in Isa. xxx., 6, is probably a popular conception, adopted by the prophet, or a strong expression, indicative of the aggressive character of the two species above mentioned; for the only leaping serpents found in the wilderness are the "*thiareh*," which derive their name from their habit of springing from branch to branch of the date-trees in which they live; but these are not venomous. The asp, or small adder,§ is never seen among the snakes of the serpent-charmer.‖ The common species is about four inches in length, and no thicker than a piece of stout wire. It lurks under stones, and even in the sand of the desert, whence it assails its prey, and thus it happens that, being disturbed by the foot of man or beast, it suddenly and fatally "bites his heel."¶ It also hides in the cracks and crevices of old walls, and is so strong in proportion to its size that, when irritated, it stands erect upon the lower part of its body, and is one of the few serpents that manifest an aggressive disposition.

The following incident was related to us by a gentleman whose testimony is perfectly reliable; it occurred in the South

* Gen. iii., 1.
† Matt. x., 16.
‡ Job xx., 16; Isa. lix., 5; Acts xxviii., 3.
§ Deut. xxxii., 33; Job xx., 14; Psa. xci., 13; Isa. xi., 8.
‖ Psa. lviii., 4, 5.
¶ Gen. iii., 15; xlix., 17.

of France, where the asp is often found. He was visiting a classmate residing upon a beautiful estate, and made the acquaintance of his sister, a charming young person, the wife of an officer, and who added to her own personal attractions and refinement the interest which attaches to a young mother of a beautiful babe. One morning the three went out for a walk in the park, and the lady, complaining of weariness, sat down at the foot of a tree, saying she would rest there till the gentlemen's return. They were gone but a short time, when they retraced their steps, and approaching the lady, saw her head leaning against a tree, her eyes closed as if in sleep. As they drew nearer, however, to their horror they saw her color changed to a livid green. Her brother rushed to her side, and at the noise an adder sprang out of her bosom and escaped. It had been attracted by the scent of milk, as all serpents are. She probably made a motion in her sleep and was bitten, when almost instant and unconscious death ensued. It is well known that Cleopatra chose the asp as the means of producing the easiest kind of death, this heartless queen having previously experimented upon her slaves with poisonous snakes and other reptiles.

The scorpion varies in length from one to three inches, and resembles a dark-colored crab, with the addition of a long tail, having a sharp hook or fang at the extremity, with a vesicle full of liquid poison, which is forcibly ejected through a minute opening into the wound made by the sting. This creature grasps its prey with its claws and, bringing its long tail over its head, strikes and kills it.* Scorpions are found in all parts of Western Asia, but are harmless in the colder and more northern regions. They are numerous in Palestine, where their sting occasions much suffering; and there are as many as five distinct varieties of them in the desert of Sinai.† In Northern Africa they are sometimes of so great a size that their sting is mortal to man.

Scorpions feed upon insects, and hide themselves in holes under the stones, or in a bank by the roadside, lying in wait for their prey near the opening. The Arab children are acquainted with their haunts, and putting a bit of wax on the

* Rev. ix., 5, 10.

† Deut. viii., 15.

end of a straw, insert it in the scorpion's hole; the irritated creature rushes forward and seizes it with its claws, which sticking fast to the wax, it is easily drawn forth and dispatched. Three children at Beirut, whose father had been stung in the night by one of these reptiles, intent upon avenging him, set out upon a scorpion hunt along the banks of a narrow lane, shaded by a cactus hedge, among the mulberry-gardens. Armed with their waxed broom-straws, they captured and destroyed no less than one hundred and eleven scorpions in about an hour's time! But the secret habits of these creatures seem to indicate that they are more numerous than even the incident above cited would imply, and that they occupy a more important place in the economy of nature than is generally supposed. Colonel Maceroni has related the following incident, which occurred in the Campagna of Rome, and is, doubtless, equally applicable to every mosquito-infested locality in the Holy Land. He was spending a few days at a country lodge, where the rooms were formed by slight partitions, with a ceiling of loose boards. His companions complained of being greatly annoyed by the mosquitoes, from which he was himself quite free. As he lay one afternoon taking his *siesta*, he noticed that the ceiling was covered with mosquitoes, which were disappearing ever and anon, being caught up by a small black object, which occasionally darted down from the cracks. His curiosity being aroused, he arose, and standing upon a chair, examined the upper surface of the ceiling. What was his surprise to find it covered with scorpions busily engaged in fishing up the mosquitoes from beneath; he thus discovered the cause of his immunity from mosquito bites. This incident suggests the fact that the scorpion contributes to the comfort of man by the destruction of a variety of annoying insects, while the instances are comparatively rare in which its sting causes him to suffer; and even against this sting there is a means of protection, to which Orientals sometimes successfully resort, the knowledge of which has, perhaps, been handed down from remote antiquity. We once knew a poor widow whose children worked in a field so infested with scorpions as to be avoided by the villagers generally; even she herself dared not venture into it, while her children fearlessly handled the scorpions, even provoking them to use their stings, without

seeming to suffer the least inconvenience. When questioned as to the cause of this extraordinary immunity, she stated that, having bottled in spirits a number of scorpions' tails, she had administered a draught of the same to each of her children when a few days old. It is a well-known fact that in rural districts some midwives are in the habit of administering to young infants potions containing the poison of serpents or other reptiles, and those who have been thus inoculated are considered proof against injury from their bites. It does not seem improbable that the experiments tried by Mithridates and other sovereigns of the East with various poisons may have led to discoveries which local traditions keep afloat among the people, for the art of poisoning is still practiced in all parts of the country.

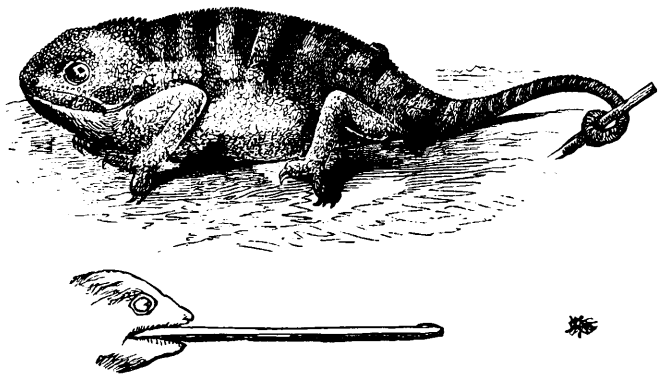
The language used by the young king Rehoboam to his complaining subjects,* "My father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions," does not, it seems to us, refer, as some appear to think, to a peculiar kind of scourge bearing the name of scorpion on account of its shape, or the pain it inflicted. The expression must necessarily have been employed in a metaphorical sense, and the comparison seems to be between the slight suffering inflicted by striking with a common whip and the intense pain produced by the sting of the scorpion. Our Saviour's words, "And if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?"† appears to be a proverbial expression used in his day, similar to the Greek proverb, "a scorpion for a fish;" for we can not admit the necessity of supposing, as has been done by some commentators, the existence of a scorpion closely resembling an egg, both in color and shape, any more than a similar resemblance between a fish and a serpent, or between bread and a stone, in the preceding verse.

The frequent references to the scorpion in the Scriptures indicate that it was as common in ancient times as at present. The "ascent (or pass) of Akrabbim (or the scorpions)" may be cited as an instance.‡

There is a great variety of small lizards in Western Asia, most of them of a dark color, but some variegated, and one species of a bright orange. They are graceful in form and

* 1 Kings xii., 14. † Luke xi., 12. ‡ Numb. xxxiv., 4.

movement, and perfectly innocuous. The species to which the Scriptures probably refer* is the only one in the country of any considerable size, being about as large as the common rat, and of a bright green color. He seems to be venomous, for it is said that his bite has sometimes proved fatal to dogs. The chameleon, referred to in the same passage, is about half as large; it is a species of tree lizard, extremely homely and uncouth, presenting the appearance of an animal formed of bones alone, with a thin skin covering them. The five toes of its feet are united, so as to form but two, resembling a thumb and fore-finger. It uses its bony tail as a prehensile instrument, by twisting it round a branch. Its protruding eyeballs



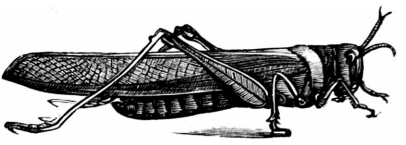
The Chameleon and its Tongue. (Lev. ii., 30.)

are covered with a thin skin, having a small opening in the centre in front of the pupils; this moves to and fro, as the vision is attracted to different objects, and the two eyes, being usually turned in independent directions, give the creature a most singular appearance. Its motions are slow to an extreme, and as it creeps along its entire body gradually assumes the color of the branch or leaves of the tree on which it rests, becoming gray, green, yellow, reddish-purple, or black, as the case may be, and thus rendering it invisible alike to its enemies and to its prey. When a fly or any other insect comes within the chameleon's reach, he turns toward it one of his goggle-eyes, and suddenly and unerringly darts out upon it

* Lev. xi., 30.

his long and slender tongue, whose extremity is furnished with a glutinous matter, and which can be protruded to a distance of twice the animal's length, being formed on the principle of the spy-glass. So sudden and rapid is the act of thus seizing and dispatching his prey, that the ancients believed this creature lived on air. The reader can not fail to notice, in perusing this account, that the chameleon is one of the most remarkable instances to be met with in animated nature of the adaptation of means to an end by the all-wise Creator. The chameleon, in common with the other lizards, is never eaten.*

The locust is an insect to which a painful interest attaches, on account of its having been one of the severest scourges with which Divine Providence has, from time immemorial, visited the human race in the countries longest inhabited by man.† This creature is spoken of in the Hebrew Scriptures under a variety of names, and in our version as the "locust," the "grasshopper," the "beetle,"‡ and the "green-worm" (margin, Amos vii., 1). But it is now agreed by commentators that these different names designate either the same species, or very slight and unimportant varieties, or again different stages of development of the locust.



The Asiatic Locust. (Psa. cix., 23.)

These insects are found at all times, and in every part of Western Asia, in Arabia, and in Northern Africa. The full-grown locusts are from two to three inches in length, and different from the common grasshopper in their regularly elongated bodies, their reddish color, and the length of their wings, which enable them to rise to a considerable height above the ground, and to pass over a distance of several miles by sailing before the wind.

These insects do not ordinarily so abound anywhere as to be troublesome, or to commit extensive ravages. It is only occasionally that favorable circumstances produce a great increase in their numbers, and render them a scourge to the lands they inhabit, or those to which they migrate. They lay their eggs in the autumn in holes and cracks of the earth, and should

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* Lev. xi., 30. † 2 Chron. vii., 13. ‡ Lev. xi., 22.

the winter be dry and warm, and their numerous enemies unsuccessful in devouring them, they are hatched in the spring, and cover the earth with a black, moving mass of larvæ which do far more injury than the full-grown locusts. It is in this state, with their wings yet unformed, that they are correctly pictured on a Babylonian gem of which our illustration is a copy. They rapidly attain the size of the common grasshopper, and proceed in one and the same direction, first crawling, and at a later period leaping as they go, devouring every green thing that lies in their path.* They advance more slowly than a devouring fire, but the ravages they commit are scarcely inferior or less to be dreaded.† Fields of standing wheat and barley, vineyards, mulberry orchards, and groves of olive, fig, and other trees are in a few hours deprived of every green blade and leaf, the very bark being often destroyed. Their voracity is such, that in the neighborhood of Broosa, in the year 1856, an infant having been left asleep in its cradle under some shady trees was found not long after partly devoured by the locusts! The ground over which their devastating hordes have passed at once assumes an appearance of sterility and dearth.‡ Well did the Romans call them "the burners of the land," which is the literal meaning of our word locust. On they move, covering the ground so completely as to hide it from sight,§ and in such numbers that it often takes three or four days for the mighty host to pass by. When seen at a distance, this swarm of advancing locusts resembles a cloud of dust or sand, reaching a few feet above the ground, as the myriads of insects leap forward.‖ The only thing that momentarily arrests their progress is a sudden change of weather, for the cold benumbs them while it lasts. They also keep quiet at night, swarming like bees on the bushes and hedges until the morning sun warms and revives them, and enables them to proceed on their devastating march.¶ They "have no king" nor leader, yet they falter not, but press on, in serried ranks, urged in the same direction by an irresistible impulse,



Locusts. From a Babylonian Gem.

* Exod. x., 15.
† Joel ii., 3.
‡ Deut. xxviii., 38; Psa. lxxviii., 46; Joel i., 7.
§ Exod. x., 5.
‖ Ussher, p. 116.
¶ Nahum iii., 17.

and turn neither to the right hand nor to the left for any sort of obstacle.* When a wall or a house lies in their way, they climb straight up, going over the roof to the other side, and blindly rush in at the open doors and windows.† When they come to water, be it a mere puddle or a river, a lake or the open sea, they never attempt to go round it, but unhesitatingly leap in and are drowned, and their dead bodies floating on the surface form a bridge for their companions to pass over. The scourge thus often comes to an end, but it as often happens that the decomposition of millions of insects produces pestilence and death.‡ History records a remarkable instance which occurred in the year 125 before the Christian era. The insects were driven by the wind into the sea, in such vast numbers that their bodies, being driven back by the tide upon the land, caused a stench which produced a fearful plague, whereby eighty thousand persons perished in Libya, Cyrene, and Egypt.§

The locust, however, soon acquires its wings, and proceeds on its way by flight, whenever a strong breeze favors its progress. Our attention has often been attracted by the sudden darkening of the sun in a summer sky, accompanied by the peculiar noise which a swarm of locusts always makes moving through the air, and, glancing upward, we have seen them passing like a cloud at a height of two or three hundred feet.‖ Some of them are constantly dropping to the earth, and, after resting a while, are driven by a common impulse to rise again and proceed with the wind, so that besides the principal cloud, single locusts or a few together may be seen in almost every part of the sky. During a great flight they sometimes drop so thickly upon the ground that it is impossible to step without treading upon some of them, and the poor villagers, in consternation, busy themselves kindling fires, whose smoke serves to prevent the locusts from alighting upon their fields, orchards, or vineyards. The people of Syria believe *noise* to be as effectual in driving away locusts as in attracting a swarm of bees; hence, upon the appearance of a flight of these dreaded insects, the inhabitants of the villages, men, women, and children, rush out, armed with any tin or copper pans or ket-

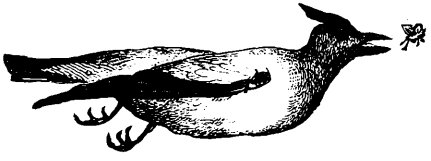
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* Prov. xxx., 27. † Exod. x., 6; Joel ii., 9. ‡ Joel ii., 20.
§ See authorities quoted by Prideaux, vol. iii., p. 417. ‖ Joel ii., 10.

tles or rattles they can lay hold of, and strive, by their deafening shouts and din, to scare the unwelcome visitors away. The flying locust, however, is not so much feared as its larvæ, which advance only by creeping and jumping; for, however numerous they may be, they are sure to disappear with the first wind, from whatever quarter it may come; and when this happens to blow in the direction of the sea, they are soon dropped upon its billows, till there remains "not a locust in all the coasts."*

The foregoing statements illustrate the manner in which the plague of the locusts was brought by Moses upon the land of Egypt, and subsequently withdrawn. They doubtless flew with a north-east wind over the Isthmus of Suez, and were driven back by a cool north-west wind, which caused them to perish in the Red Sea;† for we must bear in mind that, though most of the flights of locusts are from Arabia, or Central Africa northward, yet one species, called *migratoria*, from its extended wanderings, is supposed to originate in the plains of Tartary, and spreads thence to Persia, Arabia, Western Asia, and even to the Mauritius. This species has also visited Europe, and found its way, in 1748, to the British Isles.

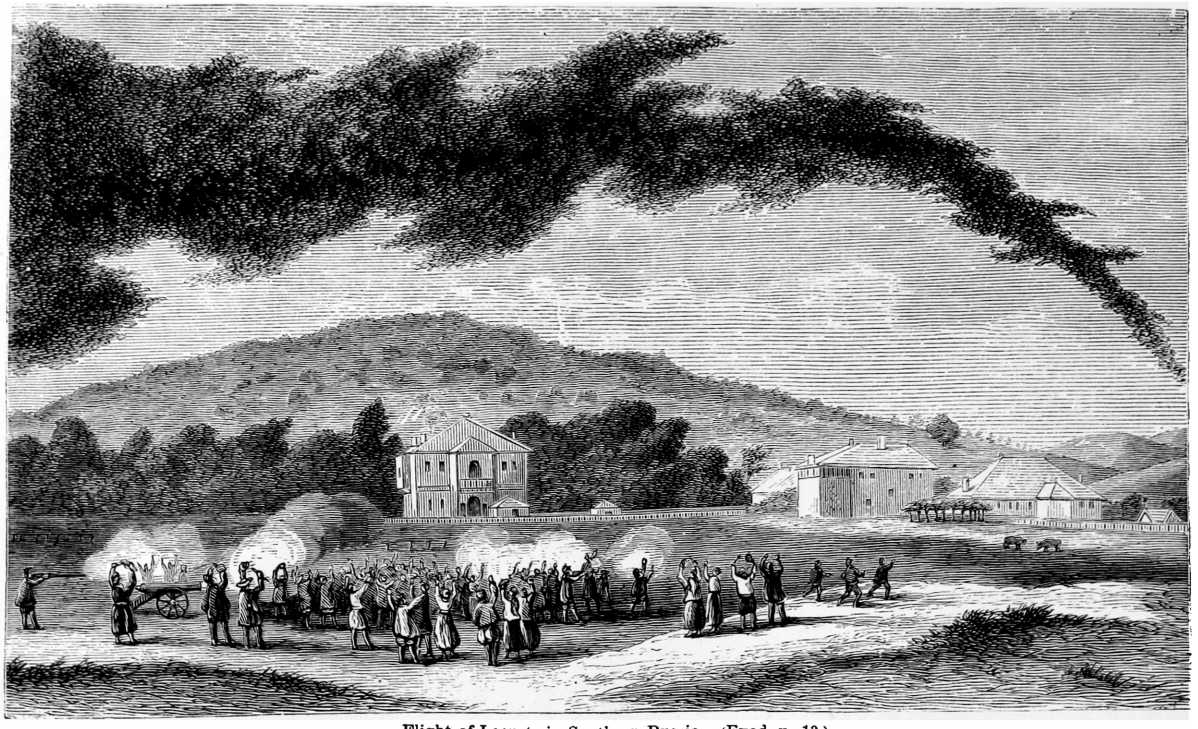
The locusts have numerous enemies. The approach of a flight of these insects is the signal for the storks, crows, sparrow-hawks, magpies, starlings, and many other birds, to gather together for a feast. But their greatest enemy is the rose-colored starling, a beautiful creature—its body a delicate pink, with jet-black wings and tail — which goes in flocks, and whose appearance is a sure sign that locusts are not far away. The usefulness of this bird is so fully recognized that stringent laws exist forbidding its destruction. Man also, who suffers most from the depredations of the locusts, is one of their active foes. It is a popular belief in Western Asia that, where a great flight of these insects invades a district, they continue in it for seven successive years. This belief may have had



The rose-colored Starling.

* Exod. x., 19.

† Exod. x., 13–19.



Flight of Locusts in Southern Russia. (Exod. x., 13.)

some foundation, in fact, during the long ages when Mohammedan fatalism prevented the use of means to ward off the effects of any natural calamity. No hope of deliverance from locusts was then entertained unless "*kismet*" (the Fates) should vouchsafe to them an exceptionally cold or rainy winter. But more rational ideas have crept in from Europe during the last half century, and the government now spends considerable sums in encouraging the people to collect and destroy the eggs of this insect. This has sensibly diminished the extent, and shortened the duration of their inroads. The full-grown insect, moreover, is extensively eaten by the poorer classes throughout Africa, Arabia, and Persia, particularly by the Bedawin of the desert. When the locusts come down upon the face of the earth, crowds of people go forth, and collect vast numbers of them in bags, even loading horses and cattle with the booty. They are roasted and eaten as butter upon loaves of bread, resembling shrimps in taste, or they are boiled in water with a little salt, dried in the sun, and, being deprived of their wings and legs, are packed in bags for use. They are beaten to a powder, which is mixed with flour and water, made into little cakes, and used as a substitute for bread when flour is scarce. Dried locusts are generally exposed for sale in the markets of Medina, Bagdad, and even Damascus.

The statement that John the Baptist's food, while in the wilderness, chiefly consisted of "locusts and wild honey,"* would best describe the habitual fare of those who at the present day lead a life of isolation and poverty in the same region; and we know that the Mosaic law allowed the Hebrews to eat the locust.†

The frequent description of Palestine as a land "flowing with milk and honey," points out the fact that the honey-bee, and, as a concomitant, wild flowers too, abounded in it anciently as at the present day. The flowers are so various in Western Asia, that the honey of different districts assumes very marked peculiarities. The honey of Kirk-Aghaj, near Pergamus, in Asia Minor, chiefly made of the flower of the cotton-plant, it is said, so closely resembles butter in appearance, that it can only be detected by the taste. The honey of Mount Hymettus is dark

* Matt. iii., 4. † Lev. xi., 22.

and disagreeable to persons unused to it; the Athenians prefer it to every other. It is made of the flowers of aromatic plants.

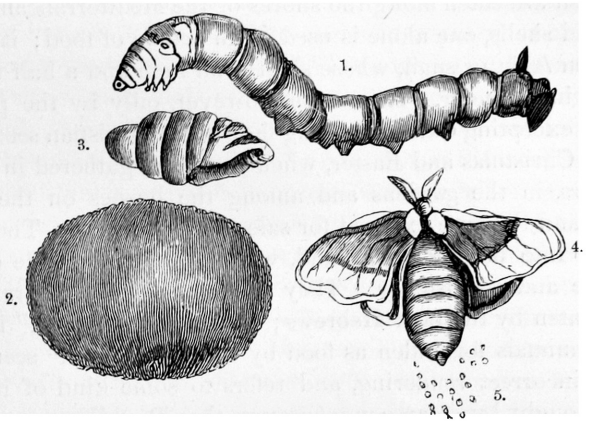
Pococke relates that when the Egyptians on the Upper Nile find that their bees obtain no more honey around their villages, they take their hives on boats and sail down the river, stopping at every green spot to let the bees collect honey from the flowers on the shore; so that by the time they reach Cairo, which is their market, their hives are full of honey.* In some parts of Asia Minor, the hives which are kept in the villages are transported at a certain season of the year to the slopes and high plains of the mountains, where the bees feed upon the blossoms of the pine and of mountain plants. Orientals are very fond of honey, and usually eat it in the comb. Wax is used to make tapers and candles, which are chiefly burned in the performance of religious rites.

One of the most interesting insects to be met with in Western Asia, unknown indeed to the ancients, but decking the moderns in glossy garments, and creating an industry which supports thousands of people upon the slopes of Mount Lebanon, and hundreds of thousands in other portions of the lands of the Bible, is the silk-worm. Its produce appears to have been unknown in the West until the conquests of Alexander. At a later period silk was made in Persia; but the silk-worm was not introduced in Western Asia until the reign of the emperor Justinian, *i. e.*, in the latter half of the sixth century. Silk was at one time so great a luxury in Rome, that it was sold for an equal weight of gold.† There are few persons now who do not wear more or less silk. The cultivation of the mulberry-tree, the cutting of its branches and leaves, the gradual growth of the worm, the formation of the cocoon, the issuing forth of the butterfly, and the laying of the tiny eggs, are episodes in the process of silk-making which we have often watched with intensest interest. We allude to this because it is an important item in the life of the modern population of Bible lands, silk-worms being reared from Persia to the Ægean and almost to the Red Sea. Much of the silk thus obtained is consumed at home; but large quantities go to Europe, the value of the article compensating the heavy cost and insecurity of transpor-

* Pococke, vol. i., p. 210.

† Prideaux, vol. iv., p. 302, note.

tation. We give a sketch of the various episodes in the life of the silk-worm, for the gratification of such of our readers as may not be familiar with them.



Silk-worm, Cocoon, Larva, Butterfly, and Eggs.

The caterpillar is at the present day a great scourge in the lands of the Bible. There are several species, and their ravages are mostly confined to fruit-bearing shrubs and trees. They are doubtless referred to in Joel i., 4, and ii., 25, and in Amos iv., 9, where the Hebrew word is translated "palmer-worm" and "canker-worm" in our version.

No injury appears to be done to either plant or tree by the *cicada* (not a *gryllus*, but of the order *Homoptera*), an insect which looks like a common fly magnified to one and a half inches in length.* It spends the entire day in singing, as is inimitably told by La Fontaine, in his fable entitled "La Cigale and la Fourmie," and spends the winter buried in the earth. She is as great a favorite with the moderns as she was with the ancients, with Homer, Anacreon, Virgil, and the Athenians; yet her song is monotonous in the extreme. She is a social creature, for she is not only gregarious, but ever resorts to the neighborhood of human dwellings. No conception of the country can be complete and perfect which does not throw in the element of the cicada's unceasing song by day, and of the innumerable crickets

* A small species of cicada occurs in North America, called a locust, while the locust of the Bible, which has this year (1874) committed so terrible ravages at the West, is there called a grasshopper.

by night, varied here and there by the hooting of the mournful owl or the *duke*, or the chatter of the screech-owl.

We have already referred to the fact that many varieties of shell-fish are eaten along the shores of the Mediterranean. Of the land shells, one alone is used as an article of food; it is the common *helix*, or snail, whose shell is an inch and a half to two inches in diameter. It is eaten, however, only by the poorer classes, excepting during the long fasts of the Christian sects preceding Christmas and Easter, when snails are gathered in large numbers, in the gardens and among the bushes on the hill-sides; and they are exposed for sale in the markets. They are thrown into boiling water, and, when cooked, resemble clams in taste and consistency. They were, in all probability, similarly eaten by the poor Hebrews; for the word "snail," in the list of animals forbidden as food by the Mosaic law,* seems to be an incorrect rendering, and refers to some kind of lizard. It is thought by some commentators that David's comparison of the wicked to the melting of a snail† indicates a belief that this animal melted away, like snow or ice; it seems to us, however, that it rather refers to the well-known habits of the snail, which boldly comes forth from its shell, blind to all danger, and runs out its feelers to their utmost length, but quickly withdraws them at the slightest touch, and rapidly and cowardly retreats within its fortress. The snail, moreover, is so frail that it may be crushed by its most insignificant enemy, and aptly illustrates the utter impotency of the proudest and mightiest of the wicked under the government of Jehovah.

The fly is repeatedly spoken of in Scripture as a divine scourge; not only with reference to one of the plagues at the time of Israel's exodus,‡ but also at other and subsequent periods.§ It continues so to be at the present day. The insect to which we refer is the common horse-fly, which greatly multiplies in all the low grounds formed of rich and well-watered alluvial soil, as soon as the spring rains have fallen and the warm weather begins. The shepherds and herdsmen and all the nomads are then compelled to drive their flocks to the mountains and elevated plateaus, to save them from being tormented by these insects. Wild animals set the example, and

* Lev. xi., 30. † Psa. lviii., 8. ‡ Exod. viii., 21–24. § Isa. vii., 18.

regularly migrate from the lower to the higher grounds, and even seek the deepest shades of the forest. Nor is it an uncommon sight to see a long-tailed magpie or a jackdaw coolly seated upon the back of a sheep or a deer, picking off a good meal of flies from the evidently grateful sufferer.

But the fly which chiefly constituted the plague of Egypt* may have been the destructive fly called *tsaltsalya* in Abyssinia,† and *tsetse* in South Africa,‡ which kills cattle and horses, and even attacks men. It is confined to the low rich lands formed of black mould, where it usually makes its appearance in the rainy season. Hence Goshen, which was not overflown by the Nile, but contained pasturage, was distinguished from the rest of Egypt first of all in the plague of the flies.§

In the present chapter we have not attempted any thing like a complete list of the insects and creeping things which abound in Western Asia. We are not writing either the natural history or the entomology of those interesting lands; our object is simply to place before the reader's mind a complete picture of the principal surroundings of the present inhabitants of those countries, and of the influence they exert upon their character and manners. We shall presently visit their homes, and picture to our readers men, women, and children just as they are—analyze their every-day life, mingle in their joys and sorrows. We may then again have occasion to refer to objects in nature, now delineated, and sometimes to touch upon other objects of secondary importance, not previously mentioned, but required to make the picture complete, and point out, as far as we are able, wherein they agree, and in what respects they differ from those of Bible times.

We have now placed before our readers a description of the physical features and natural productions of the lands of the Bible, directing our attention chiefly, but by no means exclusively, to that most interesting portion of our globe which was the scene of the principal events recorded in the Old and New Testaments, and particularly pointing their influence upon the manners, the customs, and the life and character of the in-

* Psa. lxxviii., 45; cv., 31. † Bruce, vol. vi., p. 234.

‡ Livingstone, p. 612.

§ Exod. viii., 22. The plague of the common fly is described by Denham and Clapperton, vol. i., p. 421.

habitants. In perusing this account, it is impossible not to be struck with the slightness of the changes that have taken place in those countries from the earliest historic period down to the present time. True, the cities are all in ruins; scarcely one stone is left standing upon another of all the "pleasant habitations" of these goodly lands; the country has been wasted, and its fertility impaired; the forests have been burned or cut down, and some of the most fruitful regions have become desolate. Yet all the principal features remain unaltered; the contour of the mountains and the hills, the very rocks, plains, and valleys, and the meanderings of the streams, are still the same. But changes there are, consisting chiefly in the relative proportions of the products of the soil. We have already pointed out some of these changes, and as the subject has an important bearing on our final deductions, we sum them up in the following brief epitome: The cedar has almost disappeared from "the goodly Lebanon," and the cypress shoots up tall and tapering from many a spot on the plain below; the palm-tree has ceased to be the appropriate emblem of the land of Phœnicia; and the mulberry, almost unknown to the ancients, is now extensively cultivated for the production of silk, but as it requires irrigation, it is mostly confined to the slopes of the mountains and the banks of the streams. The people were anciently clad in woolen and linen; the former is still used, but for the latter cheap cotton fabrics and costly silks have been substituted.*

The consequence is that the body is covered more than formerly, and "anointing with oil" has ceased to be practiced. The fruits of the earth are unchanged, but rice was introduced by the caliphs, and is extensively produced; it is now an important article of food. Tobacco is widely cultivated, and its use has become so universal that it is hard to conceive of

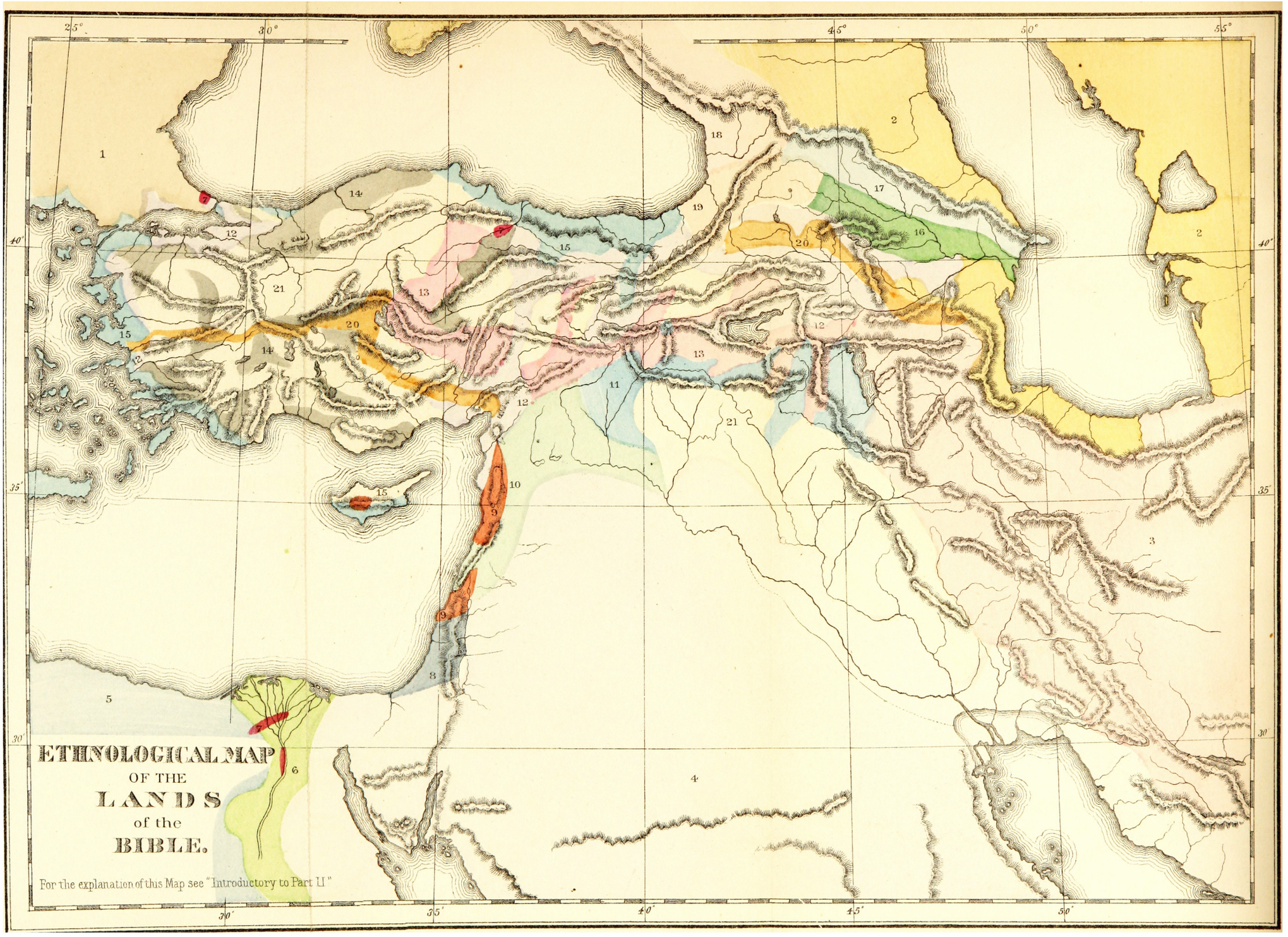
* It seems impossible now to ascertain with any degree of certainty at what period cotton was introduced into Western Asia. Many authors of weight claim that it was known to the ancient Egyptians; but the most careful examination of the wrappings of the mummies has failed to reveal the presence of cotton. The earliest distinct reference to the plant is found in the writings of Pliny, who lived in the beginning of the second century of our era. Our word cotton is, however, evidently Arabic, and the plant is thought to have existed in Arabia from time immemorial. References to the use of cotton as a material for garments, even to the starching of it, are found in ancient Indian books, called the "Institutes of Manu," dating as far back as 800 B.C.—WILSON, "Rig-veda," vol. viii., p. 105.

the fact that but a few centuries ago this weed was quite unknown. Coffee, also, has become an indispensable commodity, though there is no trace of its having been employed by the ancients. The use of these two narcotics can not fail to have exerted a powerful influence upon the temper and character of the inhabitants of Bible lands.

Some of the wild animals have disappeared, for the lion's roar is no longer heard in the mountains of Judea; the wild ass has withdrawn to the Eastern desert, and the ostrich is now almost wholly confined to the African wastes. Some of the useful domestic animals, on the other hand, have increased in numbers but deteriorated in quality, owing, perhaps, to the insecurity of life and property. Cattle are smaller and weaker, for they are farther removed from the terrible "reem" which constituted the original stock, and has almost perished from the face of the earth. The buffalo, however, has been introduced from India, and is extensively employed in work to which the now diminished cattle are no longer equal. But the horse, being more than ever the dependence and right arm of man, has probably improved, especially in the Arabian breeds. The common kinds have doubtless become more common, and perhaps the mule and the ass as well.

While, however, we bear in mind the slight changes just pointed out, we are more and more strongly impressed with the remarkable resemblance still existing between the Bible lands of ancient times and those of the present day.

We again remind our readers that our description thus far has had for its object not so much a correct delineation of the land and its products, as a description of the manners and customs which are connected with their cultivation and uses. It will be conceded that this class of customs was least likely to be altered by the political changes which have ensued in the course of ages. We have, therefore, in this first portion of our work, confined ourselves to the description of these manners and customs, the better to prepare the reader for the study of those which are more liable to vary, and which, indeed, we shall find very considerably modified.


ETHNOLOGICAL MAP
OF THE
LANDS
of the
BIBLE.
For the explanation of this Map see "Introductory to Part II"

PART II.

CUSTOMS WHICH HAVE A HISTORICAL ORIGIN.

INTRODUCTORY TO PART II.

In the former part of this work we have endeavored to delineate the physical peculiarities of the lands of the Bible, and more particularly of Palestine, as far as they affect the character and life of their inhabitants; and, without going into a scientific investigation of their botany and natural history, we have given such an account of their productions as will enable the reader to form a correct idea of the diet and clothing of the inhabitants, and of the manner of cultivating the soil and obtaining the means of subsistence. Whatever political changes occur in a country, and even when the population is destroyed or transported, and its place is occupied by a foreign race, the customs and practices relating to the cultivation of the soil and to other natural sources of wealth are apt to be adopted, without change or modification, by the new proprietors of the land. This has been more particularly the case when the conquerors were possessed of a civilization inferior to that attained by the conquered, or when the lands from which they came differed materially in their climate and productions from those of which they have taken possession. When the Israelites conquered the land of Canaan, they killed every man, woman, and child of the cities they subdued;* the property remained uninjured, and thus the victors entered at once into possession of houses furnished and stored, cultivated fields, vineyards, and orchards in full bearing, and the very tools and implements of husbandry ready to their hands, while the pastures were filled with bleating flocks and herds of cattle.† They slid at once into the places of the former inhabitants, and being acquainted with the husbandry of Egypt, from whence they had come, they, with the help of the Gibeonites, perhaps, and others of their enemies whom they had spared, speedily became proficients in the cultivation of their new possessions.‡ This is, perhaps, the

* Deut. xx., 10–16. † Deut. vi., 10, 11. ‡ Josh. ix., 17, 18, 21.

strongest case which has occurred in the entire history of those oft-conquered regions. In other instances the barbarians, whether Arabs or Tartars, who have taken possession of the land, after destroying a portion of the population, selected for their own use whatever suited their fancy, reduced the conquered to a state of semi-serfdom, and gradually learned from them the art of acquiring the natural products of the soil.

Thus far, therefore, our task has been an easy one. We shall now enter upon inquiries of a far more difficult nature, and demanding greater care and discrimination. It by no means follows that a new people supplanting the old, adopt, as a matter of course, *all* their manners and habits, even when the former are barbarians and the latter highly civilized. The conqueror must necessarily retain many of the old notions and usages of the land of his fathers, and these may differ so greatly from those of the land of his adoption as gradually to obliterate the latter. Hence the difficulty of our task. The lands we are studying have for more than two thousand years been subject to greater political changes than any other portion of the globe. New nations, sometimes unknown before to history, have rushed in with an irresistible impetus, and, breaking down every barrier, have settled and mingled with the old populations, making a new compound, both physical and moral; new religions have supplanted the old, relentlessly persecuting their followers even unto death. In this mingling together of the broken strata of human society, how shall we be able to fix the exact period to which belong all the fossil remains we discover, and make up the complete form and delineation of Jewish society, manners, and customs? The task seems a difficult one; but by confining ourselves to single objects of inquiry, we shall doubtless simplify it, and clear, in a measure at least, the path our successors may pursue after us.

We propose, in the first place, to pass in review the different tribes and peoples which now occupy the lands of the Bible, and afterward to point out whatever in their manners and customs appears to have been derived from, or at least bears the closest resemblance to, those which were prevalent among the Hebrews while the sacred record was penned.

In order to facilitate this inquiry, we now call the reader's attention to our ethnological map of the lands of the Bible,

whose study is of equal importance with that of the physical map at the commencement of this work.

We must premise, however, that this chart is only an approximation to the truth, the different nations which occupy the country being often so mixed together that a perfect map would need to be large enough to show the smallest village as well as the different quarters of the cities. Few towns are occupied by one nation alone; some contain half a dozen; yet though thus mingled, they no more coalesce than oil and water. They live in their own particular streets in the cities, and in separate villages in the country. Each preserves unchanged the manners, customs, dress, religion, and often even the language and literature of its ancestors. In marking the limits of these different nations upon our map, we have sacrificed minuteness of detail to general correctness. We have indicated but few of the cities, and have assigned the various districts in accordance with the *rural* population, which generally decides that of the cities. The reader must bear in mind, however, that the Turks usually crowd into the largest towns, though by no means inclined to commercial pursuits. A district of country is often occupied by two or more distinct races promiscuously scattered, though in separate villages. This could be represented only upon a very large map, and we have contented ourselves with indicating the presence of each of these races by applying its representative color to a portion of the district. Our enumeration of the races marked upon the map begins with those which lie about the circumference and farthest from the centre.

1. The north-west corner of the map is occupied by European Turkey. The races now dwelling there, and to which reference is made in the Scriptures, are the Macedonians* and the Greeks.† Several of Paul's epistles were addressed to churches gathered from among these people.

2. The north-east corner of the map, comprising the northern slopes of the Caucasus and the steppes bordering on the Caspian Sea, are mostly occupied by the Tartar race, with whom we have included some petty tribes of doubtful origin.

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* Dan. viii., 21; Acts xvi., 11–40; xviii., 5.

† Acts xviii., 1–18.

The same race is also marked as occupying the Crimea, and the northern portions of Persia.

3. The south-east portion of the map is occupied by the subjects of the Shah of Persia, who, though of various origin, have been included under one head, and are represented on the map by one uniform color. There is probably more amalgamation there than in Turkey; still the distinction between the real Persians and the Turkmens, the Loor, the Yezidies, the Koords, the Nestorians, the Armenians, and the Jews, which compose the population of Persia, is nevertheless clear and well defined.

4. The southern part of the map, toward the centre, is the home of the Arab race. The portion of their country here represented is mostly a desert, capable of supporting the flocks and herds of that hardy people, but not susceptible of cultivation. Nomadic in their habits, these tribes move north every spring, and south every autumn with the sun, owing to the scarcity of water. The borders of Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia are occupied by settled Arabs, probably descendants mostly of the ancient inhabitants of those countries, who have adopted the language and manners of the Bedawy, with whom they have also intermarried.

5. The south-west corner of the map is occupied by descendants of the ancient Numidians and others of Northern Africa, who have become amalgamated with their Saracen conquerors by the adoption of their faith.

6. Between these last two countries lies the valley of the Nile, the fertile Egypt. It was anciently inhabited by the Coptic race (*Coof* of the Scriptures, and our *Egypt*). These have coalesced with their Arab invaders, and constitute the modern Fellahin. A portion, indeed, of the Copts have preserved their nationality by refusing to give up the Christian faith, but they number no more than one hundred and fifty thousand souls.*

7. The gypsies, whom we have put down in Egypt, near Constantinople, and in the northern parts of Asia Minor, are few in number, and strikingly resemble in character, occupation, and physiognomy their brethren in all other parts of the

* Lane, vol. i., p. 27.

world. In Asia Minor they profess Christianity in connection with the Armenian Church. Elsewhere they are Muslims, though often of inimical sects.*

8. The greater part of Palestine, and of the strip of land which lies between Mount Lebanon and the sea, is occupied by a mixed race, probably the remains of the ancient Phœnicians, Philistines, Hebrews, and others, who were converted to Christianity, or Islam, but never amalgamated with the Arabs.

9. The country back of Sidon, and the region to the north of Tripoli as far as Antioch, as well as a part of Cœlo-Syria, are occupied by three tribes called Me-tá-wileh, Noosaïryeh, and Ismaïlyeh, numbering about two hundred and fifty thousand souls. The first are Muslims of the *Sheïte* sect, or Fatimites, as were the Egyptians before the conquest by Sultan Selim, and as the Persians now are. The two latter appear to be remnants of the original Phœnicians; they have dialects of their own, and hold fast to their heathenism, refusing to accept either Christianity or Islam, but they avoid persecution by a hypocritical profession of the latter.

10. The Syrian race extends from the "goodly Lebanon," and through a part of Mesopotamia, to the mountains of Koordistan. These people belong chiefly to the old Jacobite Syrian Church, but many have submitted to Rome, those particularly who inhabit Mount Lebanon, and are called Maronites. The southern part of this mountain is occupied by Druses, an Arab tribe, who hold to a semi-Muslim system of religion, and a part of whom inhabit the neighboring district of Hauran, on the edge of the desert.

11. The Chaldeans, often called Nestorians, are such of the aborigines of Mesopotamia, Assyria, and Chaldea as did not exchange their Christianity for the faith of Islam. They now live in the mountains of Koordistan as far east as the Lake of Ooroomia, also in Assyria and Mesopotamia, and westward as far as Diarbekir. They number about eighty thousand souls. To the same race probably belong the Yezidies, who did not forsake the fire worship of their ancestors for either Christianity or Islam, toward the latter of which they entertain a bitter hatred, on account of its merciless persecutions.

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* Ker Porter, vol. ii., p. 528.

12. The Armenians occupy the highest part of the great plateau of Western Asia. The plain of Van is mostly in their possession, and they have several monasteries built upon its islands. They extend northward beyond Mount Ararat, whose name anciently was that of their entire country, as Eden was of one of its provinces.* At Echmiadzin, near the Aras, is the seat of the Catholicos, or head of the Armenian Church. This people spread thence westward into Pontus, and southward as far as Sis, in Cilicia, the last seat of their monarchy, extending over Mount Amanus and to the slopes of Mount Cassius. They are also found along the southern shore of the Black Sea, inhabiting in great numbers Constantinople and its environs; they have penetrated far into European Turkey, and, following the shores of the Propontis and the Ægean, extend to the south of Smyrna. They are a very enterprising and intelligent people, and may be met with in all parts of Turkey and Egypt, and even in India, as well as in Europe and the British Isles. They amount, probably, to about four millions in all.

13. The Koords, whose numbers it is impossible to estimate with any degree of certainty, are the immediate neighbors of the Chaldeans and the Armenians, the latter of whom are introducing their own alphabet into their hitherto unwritten languages. They are partially nomadic, having also permanent habitations, and have long been celebrated as highway robbers, being expert in every manly exercise. They are heathen, but profess Islam, have distinct tribes, and speak different dialects. They are spread over the most rugged parts of Koordistan, and extend westward to the centre of the peninsula, and southward to the fastnesses of Taurus and Amanus.

14. The Anatolians are the remains of the various aboriginal natives who once possessed the peninsula of Asia Minor, and became one people by their common conversion to Christianity. When the Muslims brought in a new faith they refused to adopt it, and are still members of the so-called Greek Church. They are, however, generally ignorant of the Greek language, and speak only Turkish. Dispersed in considerable numbers throughout the country, they chiefly abound in the western half of the peninsula.

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* Gen. viii., 4; Jer. li., 27.

15. The Greek race are mostly confined to the neighborhood of the sea and to the islands. They are the descendants of the ancient Greek colonies. They cling to the language and to the ideas of Western civilization. In some places they have amalgamated with the Anatolians, but there is generally little sympathy between them. The race, however, is not homogeneous; the people of Tinos, Scio, and Mitylene have marked differences of character, and those of Hydra, Naxos, etc., are of Albanian origin, and do not even speak Greek.

16. The Georgians occupy a district north of the Aras, whose capital is Tiflis. They are mostly Christians, and have a language of their own. Directly north of them are,

17. The Lesghies, who, with several smaller tribes, such as the Iron, the Kisty, and the Misjijy, occupy the eastern half of the Caucasian chain and the slopes on the north of it called Daghestan, or the hill region. Each of these little tribes, and others we have not mentioned, appear to be the remains of distinct nations, which here sought a refuge from annihilation; for they all speak different languages.*

18. The Circassians occupy the western half of the Caucasus, with its slopes, to the Black Sea and the Kooban. They are divided into many tribes, either Muslim or heathen, and have been much reduced in numbers by incessant wars with Russia and by a large emigration into Asia Minor. They once occupied the Crimea, but were driven out by the Tartars. They have long furnished the chief supply of white slaves to the Osmanli empire.

19. The Laz, Mingrelians, and Gurelians are distinct tribes, inhabiting the south-east corner of the Black Sea, and speaking different languages. They are mostly Muslims or heathen.

20. The nomadic Turkmens, unlike the rest of their countrymen, have preserved their ancestral mode of life and traditions. They wander about with their flocks and herds, and seem to be heathen who make an insincere profession of Islam. Hence, like all unorthodox sectaries, they are called *Kuzul Bash* (Redheads) by the true Muslims, but enjoy all the privileges of the latter in the eye of the law. Their range in the peninsula extends from Alexandretta to the western coast, and eastward

* This great variety of dialects may, however, be the effect of isolation.

nearly to the Persian frontier in Armenia. They are also found on the island of Cyprus.

21. The Osmanlis, commonly called Turks, are a people formed of the mixture and amalgamation, through a common profession of the faith of Islam, of all the races which have, from remotest ages to the present time, settled in the peninsula of Asia Minor.

The following list will give an idea of the principal nations that have contributed to the formation of this compound; but it does not include the names of the earliest aborigines, many of which are lost in the mist of prehistoric times. The list includes the Greeks, Assyrians, Egyptians, Persians, Macedonians, Romans, Gauls, Parthians, Saracens, Tartars, Turkmens, Bulgarians, Albanians, Crusaders, Genoese, Venetians, European renegades, Circassians, Georgians, and Armenians, as well as Africans of every shade and nation. The Osmanli race is found, properly speaking, only on the peninsula of Asia Minor; but we have extended it to Upper Mesopotamia and Assyria, where the preponderance of Arab blood does not probably extend across the Tigris. Osmanlis are, however, found all over the empire in connection with government business.

Though the foregoing apportionment of the map contains but twenty-one specifications, yet it is evident from our statement that the distinct tribes now occupying the lands of the Bible far exceed that number. We have, indeed, named no less than thirty-five of these tribes, mostly speaking different languages or dialects, professing a different faith, holding to distinct historical traditions, practicing different customs, and even wearing a distinguishing garb. Yet they all possess the characteristics which are peculiar to *Oriental people.* They offer a vast field for investigation and study, requiring withal great discrimination in the selection of what is truly relevant to our purpose.



Sultan Mahmood II. and Attendants.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE ETHNOLOGY OF THE LANDS OF THE BIBLE.

In entering upon the second part of our inquiry into the manners and customs now prevalent in Bible lands, as compared with those of the ancient Israelites, several interesting and important preliminary questions present themselves to the mind, the solution of which appears to have a strong bearing upon our object. Who are the present inhabitants of those lands? Are they new races imported from other climes, and, if so, what was their former history and civilization, and to what degree have their character and usages been modified by the land of their adoption—or are the present inhabitants of Western Asia merely the descendants of the ancients who occupied the same regions; and if this be the case, how far has the character of their posterity been affected and changed by historical events or by physical and moral causes—and again, what has become of the nations whose ancient fame stands recorded in the writings of the inspired prophets and on the pages of classical literature?

These are all interesting and important questions, and require some investigation on our part. We shall now, therefore, inquire, *in the first place*, what has become of the Hebrews? Has not their proverbial tenacity led them to preserve their ancient usages unimpaired in all the lands whither they have been dispersed, and does not our inquiry into these usages thus become greatly simplified? Why need we study the customs of the strangers who have taken possession of their goodly land when we have the Hebrews themselves to interrogate? Leaving aside the question of the fate of the ten tribes which composed the kingdom of Israel, our inquiries are narrowed down to Judah and Benjamin—the *Jews* (Ἰοῦδα, Ἰουδαῖοι), properly so called. And it must be acknowledged that both the character and the manners of the ancient people of God have undergone many important changes through the loss of

their national independence and the need of adapting themselves to their greatly altered circumstances, scattered, as they have been, among populations bitterly hostile both to their religion and to their persons. It is, moreover, well known that the voluminous Talmud, which is the basis and rule of all their present customs, was not written until after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and the dispersion of the Jews; it was begun at the close of the second century of the Christian era, and was not finished until the sixth or seventh. This work professes to contain the traditions of the elders respecting the right interpretation of the Old Testament, as well as oral precepts never before committed to writing.* Our Saviour declared respecting those traditions, when as yet they must have been less objectionable than afterward, that they made "the word of God of none effect;"† and there is no doubt that the principal object of the Talmudists was so to pervert the Old Testament as to destroy the force of its argument for Christianity, and to prevent the Jews from abandoning the religion of their fathers. It may truly be said that the Talmud has, among modern Jews, wholly supplanted the Old Testament. It should, moreover, be borne in mind that the Talmud was written when the nation had already been dispersed for a considerable time among strangers, and the very customs which are the object of our inquiries had already undergone important modifications among them. There is a striking fact which illustrates the influence of the Talmud in destroying or modifying the old practices of Judaism; it is the existence of the sect of the Karaïtes, who reject the Talmud and all traditionary teachings, and receive the Old Testament alone, without note or comment. Their religious practices and customs materially differ from those of other Jews; but their numbers are small, and confined to a few districts of Poland, Gallicia, and Crim Tartary, owing chiefly to the bitter persecutions they endure from the rest of their nation.‡

The very tongue spoken by the Jews has been exchanged for those of the nations among whom they dwell. The knowledge of the Hebrew is now wholly confined to the learned, and

* For a full account of the Mishna, or the Jerusalem and Babylonish Talmuds, see Prideaux, vol. ii., pp. 94, 95, 99, 100.

† Mark vii., 13.

‡ Spencer, "Circassia," vol. i., p. 373.

it is, in the fullest sense of the term, one of the dead languages. Long centuries of oppression have changed the character of this people, once celebrated in the arts of war, and noted for their personal courage, and have made them cowardly and deceitful. Their physical appearance has greatly changed, for they have lived in various climes, everywhere despised, hated, and persecuted, bearing a mark worse than that of Cain upon their foreheads. It is to climate, mode of life, and moral influences that are to be attributed the chief differences in the physical constitution and lineaments of men. The vigorous and muscular frame of the mountaineer of Palestine, whose time was spent in healthful agricultural pursuits, and whose stalwart arm was feared alike by all his neighbors, has become enfeebled in the petty broker's or retailer's shop, or in the unwholesome atmosphere of damp cellars and narrow alleys. The open and courageous countenance of the ancient Hebrew has given place to the cringing look and furtive glance of the modern Jew. So strongly have these influences acted upon the race that the peculiar features recognizable in them all, whatever be the places of their dispersion, are just such as must have resulted from their extraordinary sufferings and trials. Yet local influences have also acted upon them; for it does not require much practice to distinguish from each other the German, Polish, Italian, and Spanish Jews; while those of this people who have long been settled in Hindoostan have become as dark as the Hindoos themselves.

In the accompanying illustration we give our readers the portraits of two Jewish gentlemen, belonging to two distinct branches of the Hebrew nation, into which it divided nearly twenty-four hundred years ago. The right-hand figure is that of a descendant of the Babylonian Jews, who failed to avail themselves of Cyrus's decree, and have remained to this day in the land of their captivity. It will be noticed that there is a remarkable resemblance to the other figure, not only in the general cast of the countenance, but even in the features and expression; but his hair is black, and his complexion dark. The left-hand portrait is that of a Jew, whose ancestors, after the Roman conquest of Judea, settled in Spain, and were driven out thence during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, in the fifteenth century. They sought refuge in the countries

bordering upon the Mediterranean which were in the hands of Muslim nations, and have remained there ever since. They have brown or red hair, and a light complexion. The original of our picture had a red beard.



Modern Oriental Jews: left, Asia Minor; right, Persia.

It is not, therefore, to the remnant of God's ancient people that we can look for a correct notion of the ancient Hebrew, his character, or manners. On many points, indeed, connected with their religious practices, the Jewish traditions and the Talmud itself throw much valuable light, of which Biblical scholars have ever been prompt to avail themselves. This has been the more easily done, that large numbers of this interesting people, and indeed the most learned of them, reside in countries where they are easily accessible to the Christian scholar. But history furnishes us with an instance of the ease with which an entire people may lose all their peculiar characteristics, their religion, and their national traditions, and become completely amalgamated and lost among races of a totally different origin; for the ten tribes of Israel are no more heard of in the annals of mankind after their removal from Palestine into Assyria. In vain have they been sought for by the historian, the Christian, and the man of science; they have not perished, but their name has ceased to be spoken among men; and though the tribes of Judah and Benjamin have not met with a similar fate, yet they differ little from the people among whom they are scattered, except in their enfeebled ap-

pearance, their religious practices, and their marrying only among themselves.

The foregoing statements, therefore, clearly show that the light we can obtain from the modern Jews is insufficient to answer our inquiries, and we are thus compelled to seek other means for the gratification of a laudable curiosity.

Since the descendants of the ancient Israelites have so far departed from the type of their ancestors as to offer but little aid to our imaginations in forming a correct idea of the Hebrew of Joshua's or David's time, may there not be remnants of the vanquished nations of Canaan still dwelling in the land, and retaining something of the physical characters, the dialect, or the manners of their ancestors? Where are the Hittites, the Hivites, the Jebusites? What has become of the Idumeans, the Moabites, and the Ammonites? Are the Philistines, the Syrians, and the Sidonians utterly destroyed? This is not probable. Some of their descendants are, not unlikely, dwelling at this moment upon the same spots where lived their earliest ancestry. They cultivate the same fields and engage in the same occupations. They were subdued by the Israelites; then, later, accepted Christianity, and finally became Muslims, amalgamated with the Saracens, and thus lost every thing distinctive.

The nearest kin to the ancient Hebrews were the Arameans and the Arabs, the former better known as the Syrians, the Assyrians, and the Chaldeans, and dwelling on the north and north-east of Palestine; while the latter, who are the children of Ishmael, and sometimes called Saracens, occupied the peninsula of Arabia. These two nations offer so much promise of assistance in our inquiries, both as blood-relations to the Jews, and on account of their dwelling in a very similar climate, that we must give them a moment's attention.

The name *Aramean* is generally applied to all the inhabitants of the country which extends from the eastern boundary of Assyria to the Mediterranean, exclusive of Asia Minor proper and Palestine. They took their name from Aram, the son of Shem, though many of them were descendants of his brothers, called respectively Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, and Lud,* so

* Gen. x., 22.

that Abraham, though a descendant of Arphaxad, was reckoned an Aramean.

Mesopotamia, or the country lying between the two rivers, the Euphrates and the Tigris, is called Aram-naharaim (or Aram of the rivers), in the Hebrew text of Gen. xxiv., 10, and Padan-aram* signifies the cultivated or arable land of Aram. On the other hand, the son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, is called "Bethuel the Syrian" in the passage last quoted; yet the land where he dwelt is called Padan-aram. In 2 Sam. viii., 5, the words rendered in our version "*Syrians of Damascus*," signify literally the Damascene Arameans, indicating that even the most southern portion of Syria, wherein lies the city of Damascus, was called Aram in David's time.

The passages to which we have referred above clearly show that, according to the Scriptures, Abraham and the Hebrews were of pure Aramean stock, while the descendants of Ishmael and Esau were of mixed blood, having intermarried with the descendants of Ham. The Arameans were, therefore, nearest of kin to the Hebrews, and we might expect some resemblance between the two, both with regard to their physical characteristics and with respect to their intellectual traits and peculiar genius. We must, however, bear in mind that a powerful influence was exerted upon the character of both by their political institutions and by their religious faith and practice. Assyria was one of the first great empires established in the world. Its flat and fertile plains placed its population at the mercy of the king's standing army, with its chariots and cavalry. The oldest monuments of ancient Nineveh which have revealed their contents to the modern archæologist date back to more than two thousand years before the Christian era. The Assyrian empire, therefore, must have already been extensive, and possessed of power, wealth, and a high degree of civilization when Abraham was warned of God to leave his native land, go to the southward, and become the father of a new people.† The artists who have portrayed upon the alabaster slabs of the oldest palace or temple of the Nimrood mound, near Mossul, discovered by Mr. Layard, the king, priests, warriors, and common people of their time, doubtless took for mod-

* Gen. xxv., 20.

† Gen. xii., 1, 2.

els their contemporaries of the ancient Nineveh. It is not probable that these sculptures are always portraits, but they doubtless correctly represent the national type of form and feature. It may be doubted, however, whether they are equally successful in their delineations of foreign nations, except where there exists some striking peculiarity. Foreigners are usually indicated by different attire and weapons of war. In the slab, therefore, which, according to Mr. Layard, represents the destruction of the city of Lachish by Sennacherib, we are not to expect faithful representations of Hebrew combatants or sufferers. Still the intimate relations existing between the Assyrians and the Hebrews, their common origin, climate, and commercial intercourse, justify us in claiming that the human forms represented on those ancient monuments are fair samples of the physical appearance of the ancient Assyrians, and, by deduction, of the Hebrews themselves. We have selected, therefore, as a specimen a carefully-executed and well-preserved bass-relief of the Assyrian king who built the palace of Koyoonjik. It is doubtless a portrait, and great interest attaches to it from the fact that it represents no less a personage than Sennacherib, as proved by the inscriptions upon it, which have been deciphered.* And we have every reason to believe that some of the most renowned of the Hebrew kings looked very much like that, both as to person and costume.



Sennacherib on his Throne. An Assyrian Sculpture.

We have, then, amidst the mouldering ruins of Nineveh carefully drawn pictures of the men and women of ancient

* Rawlinson, "Five Monarchies," vol. i., p. 393.

Assyria, from the king down to the slave, in their various costumes and vocations, a fac-simile—almost a photograph—of the very people who bore the nearest resemblance of any to the Hebrews during the entire period of their national independence. It really seems as if Providence had intentionally preserved the ancient monuments of Egypt and Assyria from the iconoclastic violence of succeeding ages for the very purpose of elucidating the pages of Holy Writ.

But where are the descendants of these same Assyrians? Can they be recognized? or have they, like the Hebrews, degenerated from their original type? Could they be found in the same localities, and living under similar conditions, we might hope to discover in them something of the personal appearance of the ancient Hebrews, and some of the old Jewish customs might still exist among them.

The history of the Assyrian people has been checkered, and often sad. After the destruction of Nineveh by Nebuchadnezzar, Assyria remained in subjection to Babylon until it became one of the provinces of the Persian empire, which was, in its turn, subdued by Alexander the Great. His successors were followed by the Parthians, after whom came the second Persian empire, in which time the Christian religion was introduced, and was embraced by most of the population of Mesopotamia and Assyria. At the schism on account of Nestorius, the Assyrians, under the generic name of the Chaldean Church, mostly separated from the orthodox Greeks, and, being under the rule of the Persians, were protected against persecution. They engaged actively in the dissemination of the Gospel throughout the continent of Asia, and appear to have met with great success. Monuments are yet standing in China with Assyrian inscriptions in the Syriac character which attest the triumphs of the Nestorian Church in that land. There are Christians in India, on the Malabar coast, who to this day are supplied with their principal clergy by the Chaldean patriarch in Koordistan. Nestorian churches existed in Transoxiana as far as Kashgar, and in the distant region of Mongolia; the great khan of the Tartars himself was known as Presbyter John. They had churches in all parts of Persia and Nubia, and there were no less than twenty-five metropolitans, or archbishops, who acknowledged the supremacy of the Chaldean

patriarch. Even after the introduction of the Muslim faith these people were allowed to exercise their religious rites with little molestation, and to colonize the entire East with their laborious clergy. But when the Tartars embraced the religion of Islam, their cruelty and rapacity made Christianity an excuse for the exercise of persecution. Its professed followers were put to death everywhere, particularly by Timoor Lenk, and the remnant of the Chaldean Church, and the Assyrian people identified with it, were driven in great part into the fastnesses of the adjoining mountains of Koordistan, where they are usually able to defend themselves, even against the blood-thirsty Koords who inhabit the same region. The Nestorians are a race of bold and hardy mountaineers, leading a life of danger and privation, yet sadly ignorant of that faith to which they cling with so heroic a devotion. We have the strongest evidence that they are the lineal descendants of the ancient Assyrians, whom they strikingly resemble in their features, and who were so closely allied by blood to the Hebrews. Their spoken language is a modern dialect of the Chaldee, corrupted by the introduction of foreign words; but their written language is the ancient Chaldee, essentially the same as that learned by the Hebrews at Babylon, in which were written the last books of the Hebrew Canon. The Nestorians have an old version of the whole Bible in Chaldee, which is used in their churches. They have been preserved from amalgamation with other nations by the universal prejudice which forbids the intermarriage of persons of different faith throughout the East. If any foreign blood runs in their veins, it is most likely to be that of the Jews belonging to the ten tribes who were brought from Samaria by Shalmaneser, and were dispersed among them.*

* 2 Kings xvii., 6. Others besides ourselves have been struck with the resemblance of the modern Nestorians, or Chaldeans, to the portraits of the ancient Assyrians in the ruins of Nineveh. Mr. Fletcher, who spent several years at Mosul, says: "Those who have studied with care the sculptured representatives of the ancient Assyrians, and compared them with the modern inhabitants of the plains of Nineveh, can hardly fail to trace the strong features of affinity which exist between the robed monarch and priests of early days and the Christian peasants of Bagh-Sheikha and Bagh-Zani" (p. 188). And Dr. Grant, an American missionary, who labored several years among the Chaldean Christians, both of the mountains and of the plain, was so much impressed with their resemblance to the Jews in features and manners and customs that he published a volume to prove that they were the descendants of the lost tribes.

The remnant of the Chaldean Christians who, as we have seen, may be justly regarded as the direct descendants of the ancient Assyrians of Nineveh and Mesopotamia, and who are now dwelling among the fastnesses of Koordistan, number about eighty thousand souls, surrounded by a million of Koords, professing the Muslim faith and inhabiting other valleys of the same mountain ridges. The latter are celebrated as the most adventurous, cunning, unscrupulous, and blood-thirsty highway robbers of Western Asia. About thirty thousand of these Chaldean Christians have taken refuge from the Koords over the Persian frontier, in the rich plain and about the city of Ooroomia, where they live in security, but in great poverty. Their condition has of late been much improved, through the labors of Protestant missionaries from America. Another branch, amounting to about forty thousand, occupy the slopes and valleys of the Tigris, in the region of Diarbekir and Mardin. Most of these have been induced by the emissaries of Rome to accept a nominal connection with the papacy.

We offer to our readers, as a fair specimen of these descendants of the ancient Assyrians, the portrait of Mar Yohanan, a bishop of the Chaldean Church, residing in the neighborhood of Ooroomia. The title "Mar" signifies *saint*, and is given to the high clergy, *i. e.*, to the bishops and patriarchs of that Church. This bishop's name, literally translated, is Saint John.

We shall have occasion hereafter to refer to some of the customs existing among these people; for their history gives promise of the existence of traditions carefully preserved from their earliest ancestors. They had not long received Christianity when it began to be corrupted in the West, but being the subjects of a power which was ever in deadly hostility with the Byzantine empire, they were isolated from their brethren in the faith during the period of the general decay of Christian doctrine. Hence we may reasonably expect to find among them a nearer approach to apostolic Christianity (barring their extreme ignorance and moral degradation), somewhat as with the Waldenses, who were for many centuries shut out from the rest of mankind.

Thus far we have had reference only to the Eastern portion of the great Aramean family. Ur of the Chaldees,* Abraham's

* Gen. xv., 7.



Mar Yohanan.

birth-place, would seem to have been situated on the Euphrates, below Babylon, at Mugheir, according to the latest readings of cuneiform inscriptions on bricks and cylinders, so that really the patriarch belonged to Chaldea. But he is identified with the western portion from his long residence there; some of his kindred, indeed, remained in Haran. And the question arises whether there exist, among the present inhabitants of Syria, any remnants of the western branch of the Aramean race, which have, in the main, kept themselves distinct and pure, either as to lineage, or as to historical and traditional usages.

Many of the Syrians have identified themselves with their conquerors, sacrificing their nationality to their worldly advantage. Great numbers of the women and girls have been transferred to the harems of their masters. But the rule holds here as elsewhere: the men who remain among their people never marry outside, and so their race is kept pure.

The Syrians (marked No. 10 in the map) belong to what is called the Jacobite, or Monophysite, Church, who use a Bible

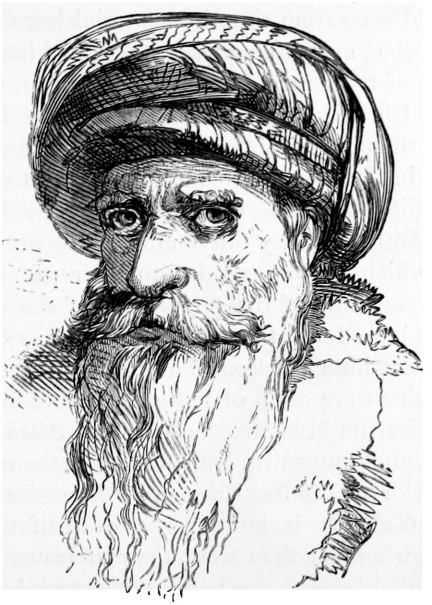
and liturgy in the Syriac or Chaldee tongue, but speak only Arabic. A portion of this people have, however, become papists. This is particularly the case with the inhabitants of Mount Lebanon, a hardy and independent race of mountaineers, who are also of the Syrian stock.

It is probable that the modern Syrians are not so unmixed a race as the Assyrians, but this statement applies least to the Maronites. From the conquests of Alexander to the Crusades, many foreigners must have settled among them, yet they have their own distinctive traits, and probably constitute as fine a race of men and women as can be found the world over. Dr. Pritchard, who occupies a foremost rank as a student of the physical history of mankind, regards what he calls the Syrio-Arabian race (Syrian in blood, but speaking Arabic) as possessing the most perfect physical development, both of the general structure of the body, and of those portions in particular most intimately connected with the functions of the mind.*

The Christian mountaineers of Lebanon are the portion of the Syrian race to whom attaches the chief interest from our point of view. Most of them profess adherence to the Church of Rome; but they are hard to manage. They are called Maronites from St. Maro, one of their teachers. They are not all papists, however; for many of them belong to the Greek Church, while a few are Muslims. The Syrians of Lebanon are distinguished from those of the plain by the greater prominence of their features and their sinewy frames, a remark which applies to all the mountaineers of Western Asia, to the Druses of Lebanon, the Nestorians and Koords of Koordistan, and the Lesghies of Daghestan.

We here insert the portrait of a man of mark among the Syrian population, the celebrated Emir B'shir Shehâb, who governed the turbulent inhabitants of the mountain, both Christian and Druse, maintaining a comparative peace for more than fifty years. He belonged to an influential Muslim family, but became a convert to popery. His features, though prominent to excess, are of a cast which the reader will do well particularly to note. He will not fail to discover a general resemblance to those of the Nestorian bishop, as well as to the

* Vol. iv., p. 548.



The Emir B'shir Shehâb, Prince of the Lebanon.

portraits of the Persian and Asia Minor or Spanish Jews (page 340).

There is yet another people, who hold a near relationship to the Hebrews; they are the Arabs, the posterity of Ishmael, the son of Abraham, by Hagar, an Egyptian,* and therefore a descendant of Ham. Hence the Arabs are less intimately related to the Hebrews than the Arameans; but their history has, to a remarkable degree, tended to preserve the Hebrew traditions, many of which they have disseminated in connection with the propagation of Monotheism, and the peculiar institutions of their prophet, Mohammed. Their early history lies hid in considerable obscurity. The Arabian peninsula is isolated from the rest of the world by two gulfs, whose navigation is insecure and dangerous, while its southern coast offers few good harbors, and still fewer attractions, to a foreign invader. On the north they are separated from other nations by the Great Arabian Desert, with every portion of which their roving habits make them perfectly familiar. Their petty internal

* Gen. xvi., 1.

dissensions and wars from time immemorial have been recorded by no historian, and, saving their occasional incursions upon the territories of their neighbors, little is known of them previous to the Christian era. About that time, however, the population of the peninsula, becoming overcrowded, was forced to seek room in the adjoining countries. But it was not until Mohammed united the hitherto divided tribes by the profession of a common faith that they fully embarked upon that remarkable exodus which has pervaded with their peculiar ideas no less than one-seventh of the population of the entire globe. There can not be a doubt that ultimate good has thereby been achieved for the human race. The heathen rites superseded by this new faith were often of the grossest and most debasing character; while the Muslim conception of *Allah* (in Hebrew *Elohim*) was ennobling in its influence upon the mind, though infinitely inferior to the Jewish idea of *Jehovah* or the Christian's *Triune God.* It is, moreover, worthy of note that the Arabs carried, wherever they went, their literature and civilization, an additional boon to the tribes of Central Africa, and the islands of South-eastern Asia, which adopted their faith or were conquered by their arms. These secondary influences of the religion of Mohammed are sufficient to account for many of its triumphs, so that we can not be surprised to learn that its tenets were embraced in many parts of Africa, in Tartary as far as the wall of China, and throughout the Indian peninsula.

The race of Ishmael, uncontaminated by intermarriage with foreign nations until the time of Mohammed, became thenceforth greatly mixed with the nations whom they proselyted to their faith; for Mohammed, deeming the division of the Arabs into distinct tribes the cause of their constant broils, preached the universal brotherhood of mankind, and brought about the amalgamation of many nations which had heretofore preserved their individuality. Thence sprang the Saracens, who, though of various origin, were one in the faith of Islam and in the use of the Arabic language. Within their own natural boundaries, however, the Arabs in general tenaciously adhere to the Hebrew system respecting marriage, and this is likewise the case among the tribes settled in the north of Africa, and even among the Druses of Mount Lebanon, so that there doubtless

exist families of pure descent who may be regarded as fair representatives of this branch of the Abrahamic family.

We insert here, as a specimen of the pure Arab race, the portrait of the celebrated Ab'd-el-Kadir, of the tribe of Hashem, which long ago settled in Northern Africa, in a region similar to the land whence they migrated, and where they have preserved the mode of life of their ancestors. We do not claim for the Arab race a close physical resemblance to the ancient Hebrew. The former are generally noted for their slender, sinewy forms, medium stature, dark complexion, and nervous temperament; peculiarities which may be ascribed to their spare diet, the hot, dry climate of their country, and their peculiar mode of life. In their language, manners, and customs, however, these people, more perhaps than any other, vividly remind us of the social life and political institutions of God's ancient people. They inherited much from their common "Father Abraham," and Mohammed's system was an attempted imitation of the Hebrew legislation. Hence an opportunity for studying the ancient original is offered to the Christian scholar, which is the more available from the fact that he need not seek the Arab beyond the trackless desert, since he may find him settled for centuries past in Palestine, the old home of the Israelites. Of the million and a half of human beings now constituting the population of Syria and the Holy Land, probably more than two-thirds belong to the Arab race; and so great has been their influence in that land and in Mesopotamia, that their language has supplanted every other.



The Arab Emir, Ab'd-el-Kadir.

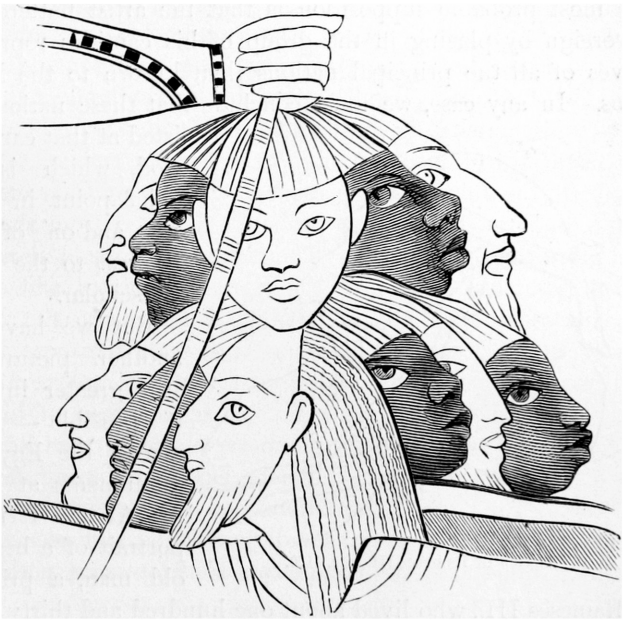
If the reader has followed us thus far in our illustrations of

the personal appearance and physical peculiarities of the ancient Hebrews, he will probably adopt the following conclusions, *i. e.*, that the modern Jews, by avoiding all intermarriage with the nations among which they are dispersed, have kept themselves distinct, but that their altered circumstances have greatly changed their personal appearance, so much so as to create what might be called new varieties of the same race. On the other hand, the Assyrians, now represented by the Chaldean Christians, dwell to this day in the land of their fathers, and cherish a spirit of brave independence in the mountain fastnesses of Koordistan. They bear a sufficient resemblance to the Jews of the present day to betray their common origin, and the latter have probably deviated from the original more than the former. The same may be said, though to a somewhat less degree, of the Syrian Jacobites, and of the Syrians of Mount Lebanon. When we come to the Arabs, however, the points of difference increase; the nose is less aquiline, the eyes small and deep-set, the complexion dark, and the beard scanty. The Arab is indeed near of kin, but he has ever lived in a trying climate, and led a hard life; nor has he kept his race pure. Yet he has done his full share in preserving the common traditions and customs of the family, together with the Nestorians and the Syrians, and even in constraining his successive conquerors to adopt and perpetuate them.

There is, however, a test yet to be applied to the conclusions we have now reached; it consists in those pictures of the ancient Hebrews, executed with more or less accuracy, which have been discovered among the ruins of Egypt and Nineveh. Should we be able to trace no correspondence between these portraits and our present ideal, we might indeed take shelter in the probable inaccuracy of the ancient sculptor; but a resemblance, especially if it should be striking, would not fail to be an interesting confirmation of our theory. And it is our deliberate opinion that the carvings of the Hebrew faces found in those two countries are remarkably alike, and that both bear a close resemblance to the present Chaldean and Syrian types, which, as we claim, come nearest to the ancient Hebrew.

The annexed figure is a part of a highly interesting sculpture, found at Abou Simbel, in Nubia, representing King Rame-

ses II. holding with one hand eleven captives by the hair of their heads, while with the other he brandishes the sword. The captives probably represent different nations; they are painted black, yellow, or white, a circumstance indicative of the existence of three races of men even at that early period.*



Heads of Captives held by Rameses II., King of Egypt. Sculpture at Abou Simbel, B.C. 1300.

Rameses II. is supposed to have reigned about 1300 B.C., which corresponds to the period of the Jewish theocracy. We ought not, perhaps, to seek for the portrait of a Hebrew among the captives of Rameses; for the nation was yet feeble, often subject to its nearest neighbors, and confined at best to the mountain districts, yet there are several faces in this picture belonging to the Hebrew type, particularly the farthest to the right in the top row; they may belong to cognate races. The central figure of the lower row strikingly resembles some of the pictures on the celebrated Etruscan vases in the Naples Museum. Over this is a front view of a yellow Chinaman, with eyes char-

* Gen. ix., 19.

acteristic of his race; and it is easy to recognize among the black figures the features of a negro, a Nubian, and an Abyssinian. It does not necessarily follow that Rameses invaded or conquered the lands of every people here represented as his prisoners; he may have encountered them elsewhere. Indeed, the most probable supposition is that the artist flattered his sovereign by placing in the group of his captives representatives of all the principal nations then known to the Egyptians. In any case, we must conclude that these nations existed at that early period, which is the chief point in question, and one of great interest to the Biblical scholar.

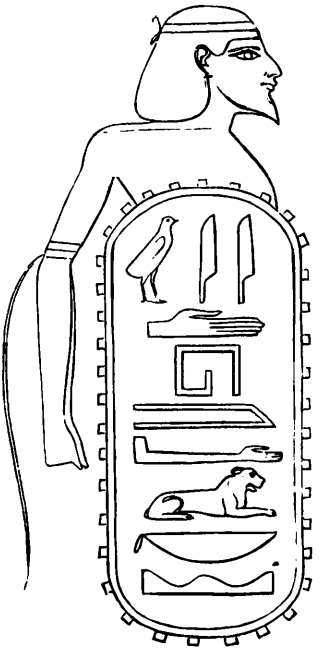


Captive of Rameses III., B.C. 1170.

But we have yet another picture of still greater interest, if possible — found among the Egyptian monuments at Medinet Abou. It is the portrait of a bearded old man, a prisoner of Rameses III., who lived about one hundred and thirty years later than his predecessor of the same name, *i. e.*, about 1170 B.C. This brings us to the birth of the prophet Samuel, at which period the Hebrews were lying under the power of the Philistines, from which they were not wholly delivered until one hundred years later, under the leadership of Samson, Saul, and David. In the present case we are not left to conjecture; a name is attached to the picture, in hieroglyphic characters, which is read by some scholars "Lebanon," and by others "Hermon," both indicating localities occupied by the Israelites, or possibly, at that early period, by the Syrians. A comparison of this figure with those already given, of the modern Jew, Chaldean, and Syrian, shows a striking degree of resemblance.

It hardly seems necessary to allude to a *cartouche* found in Egypt, containing the title "King of Judah," which occurs in

a list of the conquests and victories of Sheshonk, king of Egypt, who, according to the Egyptian historian Manetho, lived at a period corresponding to about 972 B.C. The Scriptures state that in this very year "Shishak king of Egypt took the fenced cities of Judah, and came to Jerusalem; he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house; he took all; he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made."*



King of Judah. An Egyptian Sculpture.

This agreement between Manetho and the Scriptures can not be fortuitous; it strongly confirms the authenticity of both writers. Attached to the *cartouche* we have described is the figure of a man with his hands bound, probably intended to represent King Rehoboam. Some have thought that this picture might be a portrait of the vanquished king.† A comparison with other Egyptian sculptures, however, proves the face to be drawn in the usual conventional style, so that, if this be a faithful portrait of the Jewish king, there are hosts of Rehoboams pictured on the monuments of Egypt. We can not even discern in this picture the true Aramean type.

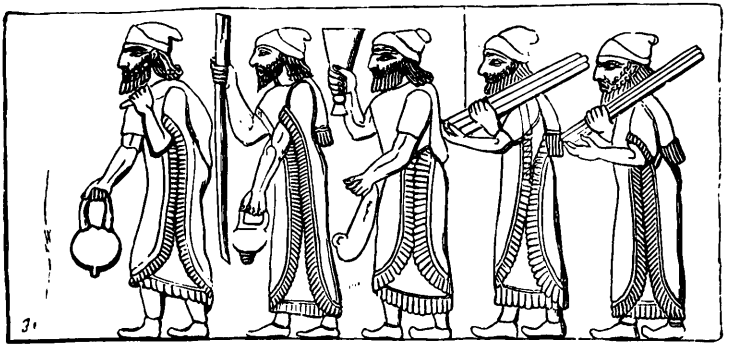
Let us now pass to such of the recently discovered Assyrian sculptures as promise to throw further light upon our subject. And here we certainly have the advantage of meeting with later productions, greatly in advance of the Egyptian in point of artistic merit—truer imitations of nature, and inferior only to the masterly and unrivaled works of Grecian and Roman genius.

The first illustration is taken from the Khorsabad ruins, opposite Mossul. There stood once a palace, whose halls were

* 2 Chron. xii., 2, 9.

† Champollion—Figeac, p. 273.

adorned with slabs of sculptured alabaster. Many of the inscriptions attached to these sculptures have been deciphered by Colonel Rawlinson, who has discovered that it was built by a king named Sargina, called Sargon by the prophet Isaiah,* and elsewhere spoken of in the Scriptures as Shalmaneser. The history of his wars with the kingdom of Israel is fully recorded. Our illustration represents a group of ambassadors with tribute sent by Hoshea, king of Samaria (called Samarina in the inscription), to the King of Assyria. The circumstances



Samaritan Hebrews bearing Tribute. An Assyrian Sculpture. (2 Kings xvii., 3.)

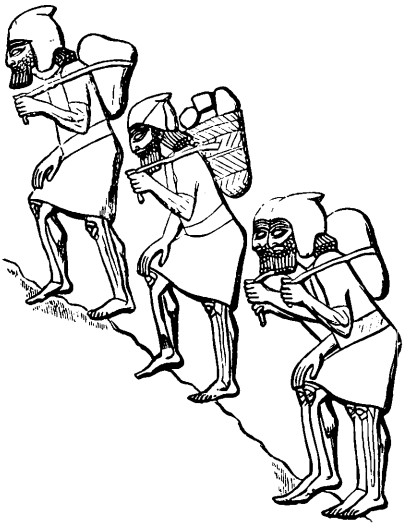
are thus related in the Bible:† "Against him came up Shalmaneser, king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and gave him presents." This tribute was paid but a short time; for, in the fifth year of his reign, "conspiracy was found in Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to So, king of Egypt, and brought no present to the King of Assyria, as he *had done* year by year." So Shalmaneser came to Samaria, took it, and carried the people captive to Assyria and Media. The features of these Samaritan tribute-bearers are marked, and probably drawn from nature. Their dress is precisely that of Orientals of the present day, consisting of a turban bound around a cap of felt; a *kuftan*, or robe; a *benish*, the long coat, always worn on special occasions. Their feet are shod, not with sandals, now worn only by the Bedawy, but with veritable *papooshes*, apparently of Morocco leather. There is, however, one peculiarity in their dress, which distinguishes it from the mod-

* Isa. xx., 1.

† 2 Kings xvii., 3-6.

ern costume: it is the fringe bordering the hem of the garment, which must have been blue, according to the requirement of the Mosaic law.*

Our last illustration is taken from another palace, near Mosul, built by Sennachi-riba, according to the inscriptions on the slabs—the Sennacherib of the Bible. Colonel Rawlinson has succeeded in reading the entire history of this king's wars with the Jews, which agrees remarkably with the Scripture record, even to the very items of the fine Hezekiah paid to Sennacherib, *i. e.*, "three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold."† The Bible account adds: "At that time did Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the Lord, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the King of Assyria" (verse 16). Instead of which the Assyrian account states that he also gave "the ornaments of the Temple, slaves, boys and girls, and men-servants and maid-servants for the use of the palace." It is surely very interesting to meet with so close an agreement between records kept in different languages and by people in bitter hostility to each other. The Assyrian record calls Hezekiah, Khazakiah-hoo; Jerusalem, Urselimma; and Judah, Yehoodah, names which come closer to the original Hebrew than our rendering of them.‡ Our illustration is taken from a group of captive Hebrews at work upon the palace, carrying stones in baskets up a steep incline. The features, it will be noticed, resemble those of the preceding illustrations, while the dress is that of the common laborer of the present day in Mesopotamia,



Jewish Captives. An Assyrian Sculpture.

* Numb. xv., 38. † 2 Kings xviii., 14. ‡ Bonomi, p. 501.

Palestine, and Egypt, consisting of a felt cap and a blue shirt, with a leathern or woolen girdle. They are also barefooted.*

Thus far we have confined ourselves to two of the inquiries propounded near the beginning of the present chapter. We first pointed out the great and striking changes which have befallen the descendants of Israel, and then showed that the traditions, the customs, and the very features of the ancient Hebrews have fortunately been preserved with little alteration by three branches of the family to which they belong, *i. e.*, the Eastern Arameans, or Assyrians, now called Chaldeans; the Western Arameans, or modern Syrians; and the Arabs.

This disposes of three important nations on our ethnological map, *i. e.*, Nos. 4, 10, and 11; and we now propose to add a few words respecting the origin and present condition of the most interesting of the remaining tribes of Western Asia.

Next to the Hebrews there is scarcely a people to which more prominence is given in the Bible than the Egyptians. The Israelites dwelt four hundred years among them; and when, at a later period, their country was overrun by their Eastern foes, Egypt was the asylum to which they readily fled. As soon as Alexandria was built (B.C. 332), it became a favorite place of abode for the Jews, and has continued so to the present day. Many of the Mosaic regulations were derived from the Egyptians, whose granite monuments are invaluable treasures of Biblical illustrations. The Egyptians were early converted to Christianity, owing to their proximity to Judea. Some of the Alexandrian preachers and divines, Athanasius in particular, were men of power, and did much in the cause of truth and for the purity of the Church in all time. But thence also have arisen heresiarchs of note, and there for many ages was the special home of the hermit, the numerous caves of Upper Egypt, and the salubrity and dryness of the climate affording conditions unusually favorable to such a mode of life. The fickle character of the Egyptians, however, became manifest when the religion of Islam offered them its sensual attractions; for they readily accepted it, and constituted its first national conquest, the immediate effect of which was their rapid amalgamation with the hordes of Arabs which swept over, like

* Bonomi, p. 380.

swarms of locusts, from their arid land to the fertile valley of the Nile. They were numerous enough to change the language of Egypt to the Arabic; yet it is asserted by those who have enjoyed the best opportunities of judging that the present *fellah*, or peasant, of Egypt is the counterpart of the sculptured effigies of the people of the Pharaohs, as well as of their long-buried mummies. They are now Muslims, and the religion of the ancient Misraim has become extinct, barring some local superstitions. Some of the Egyptians, however, refused to embrace Islam, and have to this day continued to adhere to Christianity, though oppression and persecution have reduced them to the lowest depths of poverty and ignorance. They seem to be the lineal descendants of the ancient Egyptians, and next to the Nubians, the least contaminated by any foreign mixture. They are called Copts, a word identical with Egypt; they number about one hundred and fifty thousand souls, and dwell mostly in Upper Egypt, while their patriarch, who is both their civil and religious head and representative, resides in Cairo, at the seat of government. They preserve more of the traditions of the ancient Egyptians in their manners and customs than any other race in the land.* Their church services are performed in the old language of Egypt, which is understood only by the learned, the Arabic being their spoken dialect. It has been suggested that the Copts exhibit traces of negro blood, indicated by a similarity in the shape of the head; but this opinion finds few advocates.†

We are indebted to the modern Egyptians for the faithful preservation of the Muslim traditions which throw light upon the Mosaic law. They also exemplify some of the workings of the Muslim system, which has been carried out by them under the most favorable conditions, upon a rich and fertile soil, and without the remotest interference. In their physique and personal appearance the modern Egyptians are of medium stature, and inclined to corpulency.‡ They all have straight black hair, and are easily distinguished from negroes, who have been introduced as slaves among them, by the greater regularity of their features and their lighter skin. The Arabs of the desert are of a darker hue, owing to their constant ex-

* Lane, vol. ii., p. 275. † Marcel, vol. iii., p. 105. ‡ Ezek. xvi., 26.

posure to the sun; this may be seen in our portrait of Ab'd-el-Kadir.

The "Ethiopians" of the Scriptures remain unchanged. They occupy the portion of the Nile above Syene, now called the kingdoms of Nubia, Sennaar, Kordofan, and Abyssinia. We shall have occasion to refer to them hereafter, especially to the latter, to which the name appears to be exclusively applied in Ezek. xxix., 10. The Abyssinians are particularly interesting to us on account of their appearance upon the page of Sacred History, when the Queen of Sheba (the modern *Habesh*, or Abyssinia) visited the court of Solomon.* The fact is recorded in the annals of the country,† and it is asserted that the whole nation then adopted the Hebrew faith and the rite of circumcision, which is practiced among them to this day, as it is among some heathen tribes of Eastern Africa. The Abyssinians received Christianity at an early period, but it has now become little more than an empty form. The portrait of Balgadda-Arca, a great Abyssinian chief, will give a good idea of the personal appearance of this interesting people.

Let us next pass to Palestine, and inquire who now occupies its sacred soil. There is a strong Arab element prevailing; you see it in the language, religion, and manners of the bulk of the population. Christianity once united all into a comparatively homogeneous people, harmonizing elements once antagonistic. A common faith had obliterated every vestige of the old nationalities of Canaanite, Hittite, Philistine, Ammonite, Idumean, and many others. When Islam came in with the Arabian exodus, more as a political than as a moral power, most of the people accepted the change. Some, however, chiefly upon the crags of Lebanon, held fast to a purer faith, despite persecutions and sufferings, even unto death, protracted to the present day.

But there yet exist within the boundaries of the ancient kingdom of David and Solomon several tribes which have, to a greater or less degree, preserved their purity of lineage. We have already spoken of the Syrians, especially of those of the mountain, whether Maronites (papists) or Melchites (Greeks). The Druses of the southern portion of Lebanon and the Hau-

* 1 Kings x., 1–3.

† Bruce, vol. ii., pp. 109–115.



The Abyssinian Chief, Balgadda-Arca.

ran (the Gilead of the Bible) are another instance. These people claim a descent from the Beni-Hammiar, an Arab tribe, which left the Yemen with some others, and migrated to Chaldea, about the year 100 of our era. They soon after went to the neighborhood of Aleppo; and in the ninth century moved in a body to Mount Lebanon, where they succeeded in obtaining possession of the southern portion of that range. They have adopted the doctrines of the followers of Hakem, one of the Fatimite sultans of Egypt, who lived in the tenth century. The peculiar tenets of these people (called Druses, from El Dorazi, their first teacher) were for a long time kept secret from the world, but have now been made public by the translation

of their books. Their religious faith is a sort of Pantheism, mixed with notions borrowed from the Magians; they believe in the transmigration of souls, but they assume the profession and perform the rites of any other faith whenever it suits their purpose; and hence they outwardly conform to the requirements of Islam. They practice, strictly speaking, no religious worship; their leaders meet together once a week, professedly to perform religious rites, but in reality with political ends in view.

The Druses number about one hundred thousand souls, including those in the Hauran. They hate the neighboring Christians, and are often at war with them, and it is their practice to kill every male, even the youngest infant, of their enemies, and to carry the women and girls into slavery.*

The Metuallies, numbering about eighty thousand souls, occupy the hilly country above Sidon, and a portion of Lebanon lying near Baalbec. They belong to the *Sheïte* portion of Islam, and are, therefore, thought by some to have come over from Persia, which is the bulwark of that sect. There is great enmity between them and their *Sunni* or orthodox Muslim neighbors, for they regard each other as worse than heathen.

The Ismailyeh and Noosairyeh are two secret sects, similar in many respects to the Druses. Their doctrines, however, are not known, nor wherein they differ from each other. They are supposed to be the descendants of some of the ancient heathen nations, number about two hundred thousand souls, and occupy a district which extends from the mountains in the neighborhood of Tripoli to Antioch, on the Orontes.†

We ought not to overlook a small remnant of Samaritans dwelling at Nabloos (the ancient Shechem), who still worship and offer sacrifices on the mountain Gerizim.‡ They are probably the descendants of the "men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim," who were transferred to the territory vacated by the ten tribes by order of Shalmaneser, king of Assyria.§

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* Deut. xx., 13, 14; 1 Kings xi., 15, 16.

† The Ismailyeh are the once famous Assassins (or Hashishin) who so often, during the Crusades, changed the fate of the struggle by their daring murders.—MICHAUD, "Croisades," vol. i., p. 329; vol. ii., p. 145.

‡ John iv., 20.

§ 2 Kings xvii., 24.

The Jews of Tiberias, on the Lake of Gennesaret, seem to be descended in direct line from those who settled there soon after their return from Babylon.

Let us now cross the desert eastward, and visit the land of Israel's exile, the plains of Chaldea, the site of Babylon, and later of Seleucia, Ctesiphon, and Bagdad, upon which God has visited every calamity which they had brought upon his people. Babylon was vanquished by Cyrus, and Persia by Alexander; then came the Parthians, and the Persians again, followed by the Saracen caliphs, who were, in their turn, conquered by the Turkish hordes that swept down from Central Asia, partitioned the land, and hold it to this day. What an ebb and flow of human power and pride, rapine and crime, have passed over these interesting lands! Where are their ancient inhabitants? Have they utterly perished, and become extinct? A nation never dies except by thorough annihilation, and this has rarely if ever occurred on any large scale. Its traditions, its language, even its separate identity, may be lost, but its life is propagated, and even that which seems to perish imperceptibly infuses itself into the minds of the conquerors. The cities and towns of Chaldea are now mostly occupied by a population of mingled and yet undefined origin, while the open plain is the home of several Arab tribes. Besides a small number of nominal Christians, the Yezidees appear to be the only descendants of the ancient inhabitants of Shinar who have not wholly lost their identity by amalgamation with their conquerors. They are hated and bitterly persecuted by the Persians, but fare somewhat better, for political reasons, under the Turks, in whose territory they have taken refuge. They sometimes annoy their old enemies by predatory expeditions. We shall have occasion to speak of certain practices of these people, whose religion, as far as can be discovered, appears to be a mixture of sun-worship, Christianity, and Islam. They are few in number, and confined to the edges of the Koordish mountains, toward the plains of Mesopotamia and of the Aras.

The modern kingdom of Persia is mostly confined to the plateau we have described at the beginning of this work. Its north-western boundary commences at the river Aras, not far from Mount Ararat, and follows a line across the plateau

to the edge of the plain of Mesopotamia, so as to include the elevated plain of Ooroomia. The territory widens as it spreads to the south-east, being bounded on the one side by the Caspian Sea, and on the other by the low alluvium of Mesopotamia and Chaldea and the Persian Gulf. The climate of Persia is cold, for its plains are no less than four thousand feet above the level of the sea. Its history shows that its population is of a mixed origin, yet certain districts are occupied chiefly by distinct tribes, with some of whose names we are familiar.

The province of Shiraz is, properly speaking, the ancient kingdom of Persia before Cyrus. Here lie the ruins of Persepolis and the palace of Darius, burned by Alexander the Great in a drunken frolic. Here, too, are inscriptions, altars, and fire temples, mementos of the old Persian religion, with a remnant of living worshipers, known as the Parsees (*Farsi*, Persians), most of whom, however, live in Bombay, under the shelter of a liberal Christian government. The province of Shiraz is the richest and finest portion of the kingdom. Here the Persian language (or *Farsi*) is spoken in its purity, and here reside the Soofis (σωφοὶ), the wise men of Persia.* Here, too, the national costume is preserved nearly identical with its original type, which may be seen in the annexed copy of a sculpture at Persepolis. It has been adopted by the court, though the Persians, unlike other Orientals, are very fond of changing fashions in dress. This was their characteristic of old.† They are inclined to be small of stature, and are noted for the fullness of their beards, and the abundance of their hair when unshaven—a circumstance which fully agrees with the ancient carvings. They also dye them with indigo and



Ancient Persian. A Persepolitan Sculpture.

* Matt. ii., 1.

† Herodotus, vol. i., p. 135.

henna. The annexed figure, copied from a gem, would answer very well for a modern Persian.* He appears even to wear the little curls behind the ears which are so common with these people at the present time, and has, like them, a lamb-skin cap upon his head.



Ancient Persian.

But we must say a few words respecting the ruling race in Persia, as it will prepare us the better to understand the changes which have altered the face of all Western Asia.

The Arab exodus was neither so extensive nor so disastrous in its effects as that of the Tartar race, which commenced about the end of the tenth century, and may be said to have ended in the fourteenth. These people came from the great plains east of the Caspian, the nursery of a hardy race of men dwelling in tents, and leading, with their flocks and herds, a life of constant exposure. They own immense droves of horses, with whose management they are familiar from childhood, and their life is mostly spent in military exercises and expeditions, whose success chiefly depends on personal prowess. Their skillful horsemanship has so long been acknowledged in the East, that the fastest mail-carriers and post-riders are called *Tatars*. The people are called Tatars, Turks, or Turkmens, according to the tribe or district from which they originally came. They long ago conquered China, and now hold its government, and constitute the main strength of its armies. Their monuments still exist near the mouth of the Amoor, at the eastern extremity of the continent.† In Persia they hold the same position as in China, accepting, as is their wont, the prevailing religion of their adopted country. Most of them lead a nomad life in the northern provinces. They number no less than eight hundred thousand, and constitute the cavalry and flower of the army. They continue to speak Turkish, while the Shah, who himself is one of them, speaks also Persian. Their other settlements and the changes they have undergone in Turkey proper, will by-and-by claim our attention.

We now return back over the border into Turkey, and here certainly the ethnology becomes very complicated. The coun-

* Perkins, p. 143.

† Collins, pp. 293-300.

try embraces the peninsula of Asia Minor and the region limited by the Caucasian range, and bounded by the Black and Caspian seas, and the plains of Mesopotamia and Syria. It seems as though nearly all the white races of man had either been cradled here, or, what is more probable, they have been pushed in turn toward this common centre, and crowded into the gorges and among the craggy heights of this great plateau, where they vehemently cling to their expiring national life. Here we have the Gauls from France (the Galatians of St. Paul's famous epistle), and here we meet with true Mongolian faces, speaking the language of Central Asia, wandering nomads, practicing their secret heathen rites. Negro slaves from all parts of Africa have been imported from time immemorial, and shared the harem of the master, with the fairest Circassians. Here we find remains of Grecian, Assyrian, and Egyptian art, with inscriptions in unknown tongues, which baffle the efforts of men who can read the hieroglyphics and cuneiform. Tribes are usually recognized by their dialects;* those of this region have not perished; but where is the language of the Lycaonians,† or that inscribed upon the gems or the monuments of Lycia, upon the tomb of the Phrygian king Midas, or upon the ruins of Euyuk.‡

Yet, with all these difficulties, there is much to be learned in this whole region, if we take up the remnants of extinct nationalities, and study them one by one, like pages of a history torn from their places and preserved while the rest of the volume has perished. We, however, shall content ourselves with offering such items of information as will interest the general reader.

The ancient kingdom of Armenia, though often varying in

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* The many languages spoken by the different Koordish and Caucasian tribes may be the product of the natural dialectic development of language when literature does not fix its character and arrest its growth. We have an instance of this in the Friesian dialects of Europe, and in the three hundred dialects of Colchis, described by Pliny, the seventy of Strabo.—MAX MULLER, "Science of Language," p. 61.

† Acts xiv., 11.

‡ The inscriptions of Midas's and several Lycian tombs have been copied and deciphered, some of them being bilingual. But they do not furnish twenty words—enough only to show that the languages are Indo-European. The former nearly resembles the Greek in its inflections, and the latter the Latin, though the roots themselves are generally totally unlike.—RAWLINSON, "Herodotus," vol. i., p. 547.

size, was never so extensive as the territory now occupied by the race. They are a people of fine physical development, often of high stature and powerful frame, industrious and peaceable, yet more jealous of their rights and liberties than any other Oriental race. They passionately cherish the memory of their fathers, and preserve the use of their national language, which belongs to the Indo-European family, and possesses a literature of considerable importance. Their religious centre is Echmiadzin, the residence of the spiritual head of their Church, situated within sight of Mount Ararat, upon which they believe that the ark of Noah rested after the Deluge.* They are disseminated over the plateau, occupying its most fertile portions, especially the rich plain of Van, which constitutes its greatest elevation. They dwell in the high regions whence spring the four chief rivers of Western Asia, the Euphrates, the Tigris, the Aras, and the Fazi.† They are found extending in a south-westerly direction over the slopes and in the valleys of Taurus and Amanus, where they maintained their independence under their own kings until after the Crusades, making Sis their capital. Here they still have a patriarch, second only to the one at Echmiadzin. Some of the towns in this region yet maintain a *quasi* independence, and are occupied by a race of bold and hardy men. The Armenian people also abound in Cappadocia and Pontus; indeed, their villages are met with throughout the north of Asia Minor, and along the western coast of the peninsula. Almost in every city of any importance in Turkey there is a quarter appropriated to this people, where they cluster together for the sake of mutual protection and greater liberty, while they pursue their various occupations as artisans or merchants, in which they have no superiors. They also hold offices of trust under the government. So highly is their industry esteemed, that Shah Abbas introduced them to Ispahan, then the capital of the kingdom, and gave them the suburb of Zulpha to dwell in.‡ But the enterprise of the Armenian people has also led them to foreign countries, and they are to be found in considerable numbers at the chief commercial centres of Europe. In India they are

* Gen. viii., 4, where the word is probably used in the sense of Armenia, as in Jer. li., 27.

† Gen. ii., 10–14.

‡ Tavernier, p. 157.



Armenian Merchant, Costume of fifty Years ago.

so numerous that an edition of the Armenian Scriptures has been published at Calcutta for their exclusive use. They are distinguished among all the nations of Turkey for the zeal with which they engage in the reformation of their Church, and in diffusing the blessings of education. The accompanying sketch represents an Armenian in the costume worn half a century ago.

It must not be supposed that the Armenians exclusively inhabit the regions we have described. One of the peculiarities of Asia Minor is that nations differing in language and in faith occupy the same district, living in separate villages, sometimes divided only by a small stream or ravine; they are generally peaceable neighbors, and hold the large towns and cities in common. In Armenia proper it is the Koords who share the possession of the soil with the Armenians, while from Pontus westward it is the Greeks and Turks. The Koords are a peculiar race, generally tall and gaunt, with sinewy forms and marked features. They are, by the Turks, divided into the nomad, or independent, and the stationary tribes. The latter alone pay tribute to their Turkish rulers, and, though dwelling in villages, are little given to agriculture, their wealth chiefly consisting of cattle and flocks. They leave their villages in the spring, and resorting to the higher regions, where grass is abundant, remain there until the return of autumn. Being constantly in the saddle, they are unsurpassed as horsemen.

All summer long they waylay and rob the passing traveler, and even government officials. The Turkish authorities are powerless to prevent this state of things. They occasionally send troops into a Koordish district, who burn the villages, and put the inhabitants to the sword, which only serves to keep up the mutual hatred. These people are spread over a very extensive region of country, and always select the most rugged, inaccessible, and easily defended portions of it. They are found in Persia, Looristan, on the entire range of Mount Zagros, which forms the eastern boundary of Turkey, as well as in the mountains of Koordistan, as far north as the river Kur; on Mount Taurus and Mount Amanus, where they occupy the wild gorges, while the Armenians inhabit the valleys and plains. They also extend to Pontus and Cappadocia, but are limited westward by the river Halys. They call themselves Muslims, but are undoubtedly pagans, venerating aged trees, believing in the transmigration of souls, and engaging in the secret orgies of the cock sacrifice. Hence they are called *Kuzul Bash* (Red-heads) by the Turks, a name applied to all Muslim heretics. There seems to be no doubt that some of them are the descendants of ancient tribes who inhabited the same mountains,* no less than thirty-nine of whose names are found engraved upon an Assyrian cylinder.† Other tribes have probably been added, for they now number more than a hundred, speaking as many different dialects, and often at war with each other.‡

The Georgians bound the Armenians on the north, and are an unusually fine-looking race of people. Their daughters formerly supplied the harems of the sensual Turks and Persians, but the conquest of the Muscovite arrested the iniquitous traffic, which has left behind among this people the bane of irreligion and immorality. Their name—*Gurjy*, or *Kurjy*—simply indicates that they inhabit the valley of the Kur. They have a language of their own, closely allied to the Tartar; hence they are thought to be of Turanian origin. Their physique,

* Xenophon's "Carduci" (Koords) among the rest.

† Rawlinson, "Herodotus," vol. i., p. 471.

‡ Mr. Hoernle, a German missionary, who has paid considerable attention to the subject, thinks there are between one and two hundred tribes of Koords, speaking as many distinct dialects.—See Perkins, "Residence in Persia," p. 192.



Georgian of Tiflis.

however, does not support this hypothesis, but makes them nearly related to the Armenians. It is probable that they were early compelled to adopt the language of a conquering race. The Georgians are called *Virk* by the Armenians, which is supposed to be the name of the ancient Iberians of some authors, and the Tubal of the Bible.* The Meshek are always coupled with the Tubal in the Scriptures; so also the Moschi and the Tibareni in the Greek authors,† and the Muskai and Tuplai in the Assyrian inscriptions. The Meshek are supposed to be the Russians, still called Moscov all over the East; they must formerly have been intimately associated with the Georgians, and are of Tartar origin. The Georgians were early converted to Christianity, and are still nominal Christians, though ignorance and superstition greatly prevail among them.

We do not propose to describe the tribes inhabiting the Caucasus, where, it is said, at least fifteen distinct languages are spoken. This would be irrelevant to our purpose, carrying us beyond the limits of the lands of the Bible.‡ We shall briefly speak of the most noted, particularly of such as have exerted an influence upon the regions which chiefly concern us, or afford illustrations of our main subject.

The Lesghies (ancient Legae?) occupy a considerable portion of Daghestan, the hill country north of the Caucasus. They are bold mountaineers, and were conquered only by Russian bribes. The Laz occupy the shore of the Black Sea between Trebizond and the Phasis (the modern Fazi), and extend into the interior as far as the sources of the Kur. They are an independent, lawless tribe, who prey upon their neigh-

* Ezek. xxvii., 13; xxxix., 1. † Herodotus, vol. ii., p. 402; iv., p. 59.

‡ The Caucasian isthmus is called the "Mountain of Languages."—MAX MULLER, "Science of Languages," p. 93.

bors, and are the probable descendants of the Lazi, or Colchians of antiquity.* Their language indicates a Turanian origin.†

But the most interesting of the Caucasian tribes are the Circassians, who, after a long struggle for liberty against the whole power of Russia, were finally crushed, many thousands of them taking refuge in Turkey, where they live in voluntary exile. Their country lies between the Black Sea and the Kooban River, the Circassians chiefly occupying the south side of the mountain chain, while their allies, the Nogay Tartars, are on the north. Having no acquaintance with their language, we can not conjecture to what race they belong, but they look very unlike the Tartars. They are tall, well-proportioned, and fair, being in fact the finest-looking race of men, as may be seen from the accompanying specimen, in his national costume. Their fair complexion, brown hair, and gray eyes may be owing to the dampness of their climate, which maintains a perpetual verdure, so that fallow land soon becomes an unbroken forest. Some of them are Muslims, but many practice the heathen rites of their ancestors. The long-continued practice of selling their children to the Turks has materially affected the Osmanli race, many among the higher classes of whom are of pure Circassian blood. The famous Mamelukes and Beys of Egypt were mostly Circassian slaves. We shall find many valuable illustrations of the pages of Scripture in the primitive manners of this people at their mountain homes.



Circassian Warrior.

The descendants of the Greek colonists established along the coast of Asia Minor are still found in the sea-ports, and in vil-

* Agathias, vol. ii., pp. 18, 19.

† Muller, "Languages," etc., p. 126; Le Beau, "Bas Empire," vol. ii., p. 339.

lages extending some distance inland. These show a special aptitude for the mechanical arts. They work the only saw-mills in the country, and are exclusively employed in the different mines, where their isolation has given birth to a *patois* scarcely understood by other Greeks. Everywhere, however, they have the features and complexion of the Greek race; their language is the modern Greek, or Romaic, which was at one time greatly corrupted with foreign words, but has been so improved within the last fifty years, especially in the schools of Athens, that it now closely resembles the Greek of the New Testament. There can be no doubt that the modern pronunciation is essentially identical with the ancient.

These Greeks should not be confounded with other Greeks, so called, who abound in Asia Minor, constituting a large part of the rural population, and being prominent in the inland cities. The latter are Greeks only because they belong to the Greek Church, and are taught in her schools the use of the Greek alphabet. They now speak only Turkish, whatever may have been their original language; and the fact of their lacking any distinct physical characteristic favors the hypothesis that they are the descendants of those of the aborigines who embraced Christianity, while such as clung to their heathenism are now classed among the Kuzulbashes, or Koords of the East, or the Yuruks of the West. As may be supposed, they present a great variety of types, and fine specimens are not unfrequently met with.

The Yuruks, to whom we have just referred, are nomads, sometimes confounded with the Koords. They are, indeed, heathen like them, and have languages of their own; they both alike pay tribute and rob. But the Yuruk tribes are distinguished from each other by their occupation, some being charcoal-burners, others hewers of trees, which they saw into beams and planks, while others still raise cattle for the market. There are also the Turkmens, the most nomadic of all, who appear to be the unchanged posterity of the Turks of the Middle Ages, and have never settled down in the land of their adoption. Like the Bedawin, they wander about with their flocks and herds, hunt with the falcon, and are reputed to be less addicted to highway robbery than any other nomads. They are heathen, and are mostly found on the borders of Armenia, in Central

and Western Asia Minor, in the region of Tarsoos, and on the island of Cyprus. Their features are Tartar, and they seem to have most affinity with the Tartar population of the Crimea.



Oriental Gypsy with the Gypsy Lock.

Jews are found in considerable numbers in all the great commercial centres of Western Asia. Gypsies occur both in Egypt and in Northern Asia Minor, where they are members of the Armenian Church. We give a characteristic portrait of one of them.*

In the foregoing cursory enumeration of the most important tribes which people Western Asia we have purposely omitted the present ruling race, in order to mention it last of all. They are known to the rest of the world as Turks, a name they despise, and apply only to the barbarian nomad hordes which invaded the country from Central Asia. In common parlance, Turk means a *Boor*. They represent themselves as a new nation called Osmanli, or Ali Osman, composed of all the races previously existing on the peninsula, professing the *Sunni* doctrine of the religion of Islam, and speaking, not Turkish, the language of their Tartar "poor re-



Turkish Lady in Modern Costume.

* They go in Persia by the name of *Karashy*, the Black Race, their complexion being darker than that of the Persians. Their features, however, are very regular, and they resemble their race everywhere else. Many are Muslims, and of inimical sects, and have their own mollahs. They first appeared in Europe in 1420; but their occupations and vices are the same the world over.



Greek Gentleman in his Native Costume.

lations," but Osmanli, which is made up of Turkish, Arabic, and Persian. They afford us illustrations of Scripture only so far as they have preserved the customs of the East unimpaired. Most of this mixed race are found on the Asiatic continent, the Muslims of Europe being chiefly Greeks or Albanians, in whose sincerity little confidence is reposed. The Osmanlis offer a great variety of types, of which we give an interesting specimen.

The population of European Turkey and Greece is too well known to need description. But it may be well to state that many of the islands of the Ægean Sea, such as Hydra, Andros, etc., are either wholly or in part occupied by Albanian colonists, who retain the use of their native language. The illustration given above is a specimen of the pure Greek type, and will serve as a sample of a race not a little conspicuous in the New Testament, in whose language that book was originally written.

CHAPTER II.

ORAL AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE.

THE descriptive sketch contained in the preceding chapter can not fail to impress the reader with the conviction that great social changes have taken place in Western Asia since the Scriptures were written. Those countries, with their climates and productions, have, as has already been shown, remained essentially the same. One must indeed search diligently before he can discover a change in these respects; and the same is true, as we have shown, of all those occupations of the inhabitants, and that influence upon their minds and character which have an intimate connection with, and may fairly be said to depend upon, the climate, productions, and natural features of the land in which they dwell.

With regard to its political condition, however, there is no part of the earth's surface whose history presents such rapidly shifting scenes. Here have transpired the greatest moral and religious revolutions which have affected the character and condition of human society; the most remarkable systems of idolatry suddenly crushed, or alternately struggling with Judaism; then both these contending systems disappearing before Christianity, like ice and snow before the genial heat of summer; and, finally, Islamism putting a sudden close to the kingdom of peace which had been inaugurated by the Gospel, and filling the land with a chaos of blood and rapine, till, panting and wearied with its own desolation, it now waits to be regenerated. What a complete vanishing away of world-renowned empires, which have left scarce a vestige behind them! what equally magical growth of empires undreamed of till that hour!

Some of our readers may wonder that any relics remain after so many successive wrecks, to tell a story that ended two thousand years ago. But let them not overestimate the ardu-

ousness of the task before us. We have shown that not only do many direct descendants of the Hebrews exist in different parts of the world—faithful depositaries of many of their national traditions, but cognate tribes, the Assyrians, the Syrians, and Arabs, still preserve their national identity, and cling with Shemitish tenacity to the usages of their ancestors. As we now proceed to pick up, one by one, the fragments handed down with religious care, that we may build up again the fabric of the ancient Hebrew society, we shall be troubled only with the abundance of the materials, and the difficulty of our task will chiefly consist in eliminating and casting aside what is superfluous or doubtful.

In our examination of races nearest of kin to the Hebrews, we endeavored to throw some light upon the physical characteristics of the latter people. We shall not pursue the subject farther, but proceed to speak of the *language* of the ancient Israelites as the next subject of inquiry.

Among all the tongues now spoken in Western Asia, is there any which can give us a fair idea of the dialect in use among that people during the nineteen centuries of their political existence, which can impart the general sound, the construction, and any of the peculiarities of the language selected to be the medium of communication between the Deity and his erring creatures? What were the utterances which proclaimed, with the voice of thunder, the commandments of Jehovah from Sinai's cloud-enveloped summit, while nearly two millions of human beings stood in the plain below, and worshiped with fear and trembling?* We fain would know something of that tongue in which the sweet singer of Israel struck the first note of a harmony which has never since ceased to ascend from earth to heaven; in which the prophets uttered their denunciations and their lamentations; and, above all, the dialect in which He that "spake as never man spake," first proclaimed the gospel of "peace on earth and good-will toward men."

The foregoing inquiries do not spring from a desire merely to gratify a vain curiosity, for what is it which chiefly distinguishes from each other the different races and nations of men, if it be not their language and modes of speech? These un-

* Exod. xx., 18–22.

doubtedly contain a more complete revelation of the character of the people who use them than almost any other mark of distinction. Compare, for instance, the Sclavonic languages, so chary of vowels, which are half smothered by crowding consonants, with the Italian, sonorous and clear, abounding with harmonious vocals; or, again, with the language of the Bushmen of South Africa, filled with its hisses and clicks, so like the sounds made by the snakes and other reptiles which abound there—do they not all tell a tale of climate, mode of life, and political condition which could not otherwise be so briefly and strikingly revealed? Language also exerts a powerful influence upon the mind, for it is not only the means by which we communicate our thoughts to others, but constitutes the garb assumed by our ideas in our own minds. Every man thinks in his own familiar tongue, and, when conversant with several, his ideas assume the garb of the language which suits him best. The dialect of a people is the epitome of all their knowledge, for its words express no idea with which they are not familiar. New words can, indeed, be coined with greater facility in one language than in another; but whoever does this must communicate the new idea by circumlocution before the word intended to express it can be fully understood. There is a saying in the East, that "a man is as many times a man as he knows languages." This doubtless means that he thereby becomes acquainted with the ideas of new peoples, and that every language he acquires opens to him a new source both of knowledge and influence; for the acquisition of two or more languages does not simply imply the power to represent the same idea by so many distinct sounds or words. This may indeed be true of material objects; but as soon as we pass to the immaterial, there is at once a difference in the meaning perceptible in a literal translation. Even words belonging to the first of these two classes, while they cease not to represent definite objects recognizable by the senses, often convey in one language a shade of meaning which they do not express in another. In the word *woman*, for instance, in English, the qualification *wo* placed before *man* indicates merely a difference of sex; in Latin, she is called the *mulier*, a word derived from *mollior*—softer, more tender; in Hebrew, *ish* signifies *man*, and the addition of a terminal vowel makes it *isha*—a woman. In all three of

these languages, the words we have cited are also applied to a *wife*. In Turkish, however, the name *karù*—woman—is never applied to a wife; she is always called *ev*, which signifies *house*, while the Armenians call her *ùndanik*, or the keeper at home, a word which includes the children; they also call the wife *gin*, *i. e.*, a woman.

It has been supposed by some that the Hebrew must be the most perfect and beautiful language in existence, because of its adoption by the Deity as a medium of communication with mankind. In matters of this nature, however, as well as in every scientific investigation, the inductive mode of reasoning is always the safest. We can no more judge, *à priori*, of the characteristics of the Hebrew tongue than we can tell beforehand what are the animals and vegetables which exist in a land entirely unknown to us. Moreover, as the object of the Deity was to impart instruction to man, He was limited to the use of words already understood, expressive of ideas already familiar to those whom he addressed. It would have been easy for Him to speak in strains as melodious as angels ever uttered, or to employ words whose meaning angels could not fathom. But revelation would then have been a failure, and the Bible a sealed book. The student of this Divine Revelation, therefore, must not expect to find in the Hebrew dialect any thing beyond a human language, whose range is limited to the ideas of a people who had indeed come in contact with the highest civilization of their time, but who needed to be kept aloof from its demoralizing heathenism.

It is through the medium of this human dialect, however, that the inspired authors of Scripture have brought to light truths wholly unknown before, but now made familiar to us by their writings, and have enforced them with a power and eloquence unapproached by any other book.

We have already pointed out the fact that Abraham was an Aramean. The Syrian language seems to have been in use at that epoch through the whole extent of Syria and Mesopotamia. The Canaanites, or Phœnicians, who occupied Palestine and Mount Lebanon, spoke a dialect of this language, which, having been adopted by Abraham and his descendants, was sufficiently modified to deserve the distinctive name of the Hebrew tongue, whose golden age appears to have extended from

the reigns of David and Solomon to the Babylonish captivity.*

About the time of the conquest of Palestine by the Jews, the Canaanites, more particularly the Sidonians, having founded the city of Tyre, which soon became the chief emporium of the world's commerce, sent their surplus population across the sea to Cyprus, to the coasts of Asia Minor, to Crete, to continental Greece, and to Northern Africa. On the shores of the latter they founded the important city of Carthage, which shortly rivaled Tyre herself in opulence and power. The Carthaginians built towns on the coast of Sicily, and occupied the little island of Malta, whose fine double harbor was doubtless fully appreciated by this commercial people.† The language of the Phœnicians has now perished, being supplanted by the dialects of more powerful nations which have conquered their colonies as well as the mother country. The inhabitants of the little island of Malta alone still speak the language. It is unpolished indeed, rude as the people whose ideas it serves to express, and filled with Italian, French, and English words, adopted from their successive masters. But there it stands, a living proof of the fact that a people speaking a language so nearly akin to that in which the Old Testament was originally written once lived in the country conquered by the Hebrews. The latter have lost their own tongue, though they understand the meaning of their sacred books; and yet the Hebrew is not wholly a dead language, for the rude Maltese still essentially speak it, confirming the history of its original colonization.‡

The history of the ten tribes after their removal from Palestine into Media, B.C. 721, by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, is involved in an obscurity which the assiduous efforts of scholars

* The Shemitish character of the language of Assyria is proved by the many cuneiform inscriptions found in Assyrian ruins, which have been read by learned men, and leave not the smallest doubt that it "closely resembled the Arabic, Hebrew, Syriac, and Phœnician, and was especially allied to the Hebrew." (Rawlinson.) The oldest inhabitants of Canaan were Cushites from Egypt, but they were driven out before the time of Abraham by the Hittites and other Shemites, speaking what is now called the Phœnician dialect.

† Gillies, "Greece," vol. ii., chap. xi., p. 5.

‡ On the Maltese dialect, see Gesenius's essay, "Versuch über die Maltische Sprache," Leipsic, 1810. There are still Phœnician inscriptions about the island. See Rawlinson, "Herodotus," vol. ii., p. 41.

and antiquarians have not been able to dispel. Media has, since that period, been overrun by so many devastating hordes; its political condition, its religious faith, and its very language, have so many times been completely changed, each change implying the destruction of what preceded it, that it rendered quite improbable the solution of this mystery. Not so, however, with the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; they had remained faithful to the religion given them in so preternatural a manner; the heathen around them, and even their own heathenish brethren of the ten tribes, had perished from the memory of man; but they were wonderfully preserved through the seventy years' captivity in Babylon, B.C. 606–536. They appear to have enjoyed many privileges during this long exile from the land of their fathers. King Nebuchadnezzar, having rebuilt or repaired the city of Babylon,* which was of very great extent, added many of the Jews to its population, and not a few of this people occupied high positions in his court and government, and those of his successors.† Thus were the Jews brought into frequent contact with the Chaldeans as well as with the Assyrians, who were likewise transferred to Babylon when Nineveh was destroyed,‡ just before the capture of Jerusalem.§ The original dialect of Abraham had been the Chaldee, changed to the Phœnician by his posterity; and the residence of these in Babylon for more than a generation naturally brought about their return to the language first spoken by their ancestor Abraham. We have evidence, a hundred years before the captivity, that the language of the Hebrews was not the same as that of the Assyrians,‖ for the words of

* Dan. iv., 29, 30. † Neh. ii., 1; Est. ii., 17; x., 2, 3; Dan. ii., 48, 49.

‡ Nahum iii., 7, 10, 18.

§ The original people of Babylonia were Cushites (Gen. x., 8–10), as is proved by many inscriptions on bricks, cylinders, etc., of an older date than the Assyrian kingdom, which are in a Cushite or Ethiopian dialect, nearly akin to the Abyssinian, Galla, Gonga, Agau, Wolaitsa, and other languages of the same family. About the time that Nineveh comes upon the stage all inscriptions cease in Babylonia; but they again appear nearly one thousand years later, on the fall of that city, but are in a totally different language from before, *i. e.*, in a Shemitish dialect, the language of the later books of the Bible. The change took place while Babylon was subject to Nineveh, which, as we have seen, was occupied by a Shemitish race. Such changes in the languages of the conquered have repeatedly occurred in modern times in the lands of the Bible.

‖ 2 Kings xviii., 26.

Eliakim and Shebna to Rabshakeh indicate that there was sufficient difference between the national dialect of the latter and that of the common people of Jerusalem to prevent their understanding one another; they also prove that the dialect of the people of Nineveh was identical with the Syrian language; for they said, "Speak not in the Jews' language, but in your Syrian tongue, which *we* understand."* On the other hand, the change which occurred during the captivity in the dialect spoken by the Jews is proved by a corresponding change in the language of those of their sacred books which were written just before and after their return to their own country. We have, furthermore, a proof of this decided change, in the fact that when Ezra the scribe "stood upon a pulpit of wood" in the sight of all the people gathered together as one man, in the street that was before the water-gate of Jerusalem, and read to them in the book of the law of God, "*he gave the sense, and caused them to understand* the reading;" in other words, he translated the original Hebrew of Moses into the Chaldean of the returned captives. The latest books of the Old Testament are written in this Chaldee dialect, and there is abundant evidence in the New Testament that it continued to be the spoken language of the Jewish people until the taking of Jerusalem by Titus, A.D. 74, when their dispersion in many lands led them to exchange it for the dialects of the Gentiles.†

For several centuries after the Babylonish captivity, one of the regular duties at the synagogue consisted, after the reading of the Hebrew Scriptures, in giving the interpretation in the Chaldee dialect, first verbally, and later out of the Chaldee Targums, or paraphrases, now mostly lost. When our Lord quoted Isa. lxi., 1, in his discourse at the synagogue of Nazareth,‡ he must have read it in the Chaldee version understood by the people, for his words are neither those of the Hebrew original nor of the Greek Septuagint. So in Mark xv.,

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* Prideaux, vol. iv., p. 223.

† According to Gesenius, the writings of the Old Testament in which this dialect appears, first faintly, and then so as to supersede the Hebrew, are the following: 1st and 2d Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Jonah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Daniel, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, and some of the Psalms. These books are, as literary works, decidedly inferior to those of an earlier date.

‡ Luke iv., 18.

34, *Eloï, Eloï, lama, sabachthani*, quoted from Psa. xxii., 1, are Chaldee; the Hebrew original is, *Eli, Eli, lama azabtani*. There are yet Jews in the Persian province of Tabriz and in Palestine, who to this day use the Chaldee or Syriac tongue, in which were written the latest books of the Old Testament, and which was spoken by the Israelites for about six hundred years; nor can it be called a dead language any more than the Hebrew, since it is still spoken by two hundred thousand Chaldean Christians in Koordistan, Aderbijan, and Upper Mesopotamia. Theirs is indeed a rude dialect, with a large intermixture of Persian, Arabic, and Koordish words, and even phrases; yet it is essentially the language of the ancient Ninevites and Babylonians—the language of Abraham, of Nehemiah, Ezra, and others of the minor prophets, and, above all, the language in which our Saviour uttered his sublime teachings, in which he spoke his last words, crying aloud in his last agony, "My God! my God! why hast Thou forsaken me?"*

The Maltese and the modern Syriac, then, are the living representatives of the two dialects in which the Old Testament was written. Few, however, enjoy the opportunity of hearing them spoken, and thus forming an idea of the language of the Hebrews. Moreover, in their present condition they are poor representatives indeed of a language which was probably unsurpassed in harmony and wealth. It would be easy to show that not only do the richness and regular construction of a language depend on the cultivation of those who speak it, but that its very pronunciation is so much affected by this cause, that a stranger would fail to recognize the same language in the mouth of the rude mountaineer and of the polished inhabitant

* It has been suggested that the difficult passage, Ezra iv., 7, may be explained by the fact that there is considerable difference of pronunciation, but none in writing, between the Eastern and Western Syriac of the present day. The words in Ezra are: "In the days of Artaxerxes wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their companions, unto Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the writing of the letter was written in the Syrian tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue." This is supposed to mean that the letter was written with characters common to both the Eastern and Western Syriac, but that the man who read it to the king pronounced it as done by the Eastern Syrians, then exclusively called Syrians. (Fletcher, p. 139.) We would, however, suggest that the "Syrian writing" is put in opposition to the cuneiform, and the "Syrian tongue" to the Persian or court language. We now have in Turkey the Armeno-Turkish and Greco-Turkish, or the Turkish with Greek or Armenian letters.

of a metropolis. Every one knows that the English language, for instance, is spoken differently in London, in Yorkshire, in Scotland, in Ireland, and in the United States, yet it is the same language everywhere.

This is still more strikingly seen in Western Asia. The Armenians of Van speak a rough dialect which can hardly be understood, and is much ridiculed by their polished brethren of Constantinople, though it is in fact, in other respects, the nearest approach to the language of their fathers. The Turkish, as spoken by the Crimean Tartars and Turkmens, is rude and most uncouth, while the same tongue can not be surpassed in softness, harmony, and richness, as it is spoken by the educated classes of Stambool, and especially by the ladies of the imperial palace. There can be no doubt, therefore, that neither the Maltese nor the Syriac can give us any adequate conception of the language which was spoken by Moses, David, and Isaiah.

But there is, fortunately, a language so near akin to the ancient Hebrew, that we may consider it as its modern dialect or representative, holding the same relation to it as the Italian does to the Latin, or the modern Greek to the ancient. We refer to the Arabic, probably spoken by a larger number of human beings than any other language. It is so near the ancient Hebrew, that the Maltese, who, as we have seen, speaks essentially the latter language, is able easily to communicate with the Arab. It is also nearly akin to the ancient Syriac, or Chaldee, so that a person is often struck with their resemblance when listening to the Chaldean Christians of Koordistan.

In answer, then, to the query respecting the language of the ancient Israelites, we would point to the Arab, and direct attention to the dialect he speaks. But as many of our readers may never have the opportunity of hearing the Arabic from the lips of those to whom it is indigenous, we will endeavor, as briefly as possible, to give them some idea of its peculiarities.

There is a saying in the East that when our first parents were tempted in Eden and fell from their blissful estate, the serpent, wishing to beguile Eve, addressed her in Arabic, as the best instrument of persuasive eloquence. Eve spoke to her husband in Persian, the language of tenderness and affection; and the angel Gabriel, commissioned to expel them from Para-

dise, after vainly addressing them in various dialects, finally succeeded in frightening them away by the use of the Tartar-Turkish.

Every nation is apt to make its own dialect the standard by which to judge of the harmony and beauty of all others. We can with greater impartiality compare several languages of which we are entirely ignorant, and, by carefully listening to their sounds, note the peculiarities of each in this respect. With regard to the English language, for instance, a stranger who understands not a word of it is always struck with two peculiarities, *i. e.*, the frequency of the sibilants, and the fact that, in speaking it, the mouth is but slightly open, so that the vowels are never as rounded and full as with more Southern dialects. In the German, on the other hand, while the vowels are not any clearer, there are fewer sibilants and more gutturals. In the Italian the vowels are very full, because the mouth is more open, and there is an absence of both sibilants and gutturals, with a predominance of the liquid consonants; hence the Italian is the language of song, and it gives less prominence to the consonants than any known language, unless it be that of the Sandwich Islands. The Arabic has full vowels, a moderate amount of sibilants and gutturals, and its enunciation being fuller than that of the Italian admits the use of the letter *aïn*, which is not found in the languages of more northern climes.

Hence it will be seen that the Arabic has an uncommonly extensive range of sounds, not one of which is inharmonious, being softened by clear and full vowels. A stranger usually receives an unfavorable impression of the Arabic, hearing it spoken chiefly by rough boatmen or muleteers. But he can not form an intelligent opinion concerning it until he has heard it in the homes of the people, and particularly from the lips of woman. No more can a stranger be considered fit to pronounce upon the harmony of the English of Shakspeare and of the Bible, when he has only heard the jargon of the cabman or of the railway porter.

And we may here remark that there were doubtless differences of pronunciation among the Hebrews of different districts, as is the case among the Arabs of the present day. We have, indeed, a striking instance of this in the incidents nar-

rated in Judg. xii., 6. Some have thought that the statement is applicable only to the word *shibboleth*, which the Ephraimites pronounced *sibboleth*, while the Gileadites gave the initial letter the sound of *sh*. The former were doubtless unable to give this sound, and perished, being betrayed as members of the tribe of Ephraim by this physical peculiarity in their organs of speech, which was evidently a well-known and recognized fact. We need not go into the question as to how extensively this peculiarity had spread; whether it prevailed at any time among all the Hebrews on the west side of the Jordan, when it commenced, or how long it lasted. But it is worthy of note that we have a modern parallel of this striking peculiarity, which is well known to all the people of the Levant; the Greek language does not possess the *sh* sound, though it probably exists in all the cognate dialects. And it is noticeable that when a Greek learns an Oriental language, however proficient he may become in it, he is always betrayed by his substitution of *s* for *sh;* which they all possess. This is as true of those Greeks who have lived for generations upon the Asiatic coast, but chiefly use their own tongue. The defect is cured only by learning an Oriental language in infancy.

The Arabic is recognized as one of the richest languages in the world, and there is no end of anecdotes current in the East illustrative of its wealth. We will repeat but one of these: A learned poet and historian of Mecca, walking one day outside of the city, met an old woman of whom he asked what she had in her bundle; she answered by a word he had never heard before. The question was repeated, and again followed by a reply unintelligible to the scholar; and so the old woman went on, giving successively thirty-nine different Arabic names, until, at the fortieth, she was understood to mean *onions!*

Should the reader consider this to be an illustration suggestive of the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," let him remember that any Arab child will readily repeat seven different names for the lion, each of which is applicable to that royal beast alone. No less than ninety-nine different names are appropriated to the Deity. There is one peculiarity of the Arabic language, possessed alike by the Hebrew and the Syriac, which distinguishes it from our own modern European languages, and is generally considered as one of its most striking char-

acteristics. Many words contain two consonants only, and a much larger number have three; these remain unaltered, while the vowels of the word undergo various changes, so that they constitute its stem, or, as it might be termed, the branches, while the vowels and inflections are the leaves of the tree. The vowels are changed according to fixed rules, producing a corresponding change in the meaning. For instance, take the three consonants *k*, *t*, and *b*, as an original frame-work; out of these the Arabs construct the following words: *keteb*, to write (literally, *he wrote*); *ketîby*, a writing; *kitâb*, a book; *kŭtub*, books; and *ka-tib*, a scribe; then, by prefixing an *m*, *mektûb*, an epistle (literally, *written*), and *mekteb*, a school, *i. e.*, a place where writing is done. It is easy to see that this peculiarity enables the Arab to coin new words indefinitely by a mere change in the vowels, instead of combining several words, as is done in the European languages. It also allows him to cultivate his fondness for alliteration, and much of the poetry of the country contains a play upon words which is not without beauty. Take, for instance, the ditty which begins with the following lines, so often in the mouth of the little ones:

Ya wutwât, wetty, wetty,	O bat! swoop low, swoop low,
Ta itamak iz-zbiby	That I may feed thee with raisins;
Ya wutwât, âlly, âlly,	O bat! fly high, fly high,
La tékulak id-diby.	Lest the she-wolf catch thee.

When the Arabs, sitting in a group around the camp-fire, have used up all their thrilling tales of war and robbery, they begin to repeat scraps of poetry,* and nothing captivates their imagination, or delights them more, than the ballads, improvised or recited *memoriter*, which extol the valor of some renowned hero of their tribe. The favored name, skillfully handled by the poet, is made to undergo successive changes, each of which is an expression of some new quality, or record of some heroic deed, and elicits a fresh burst of admiration from the eager listeners.† So, doubtless, used the Hebrews to repeat the historic song of Moses and Miriam,‡ and so did they enthusiastically listen to the story of the discomfiture of Sisera, commemorated by Deborah,§ and to other compositions of a similar character.‖

* See Appendix II.

† Porter, "Damascus," vol. ii., p. 129.

‡ Exod. xv., 1–21.

§ Judg. v.

‖ 2 Sam. i., 18, 19; iii., 33; 2 Chron. xxxv., 25.

Many examples of the play upon words referred to occur in the original Hebrew of the Old Testament, more particularly in the poetic and prophetic writings, which it is, of course, impossible to preserve in a translation. The fact, however, is indicated by the signification of many of the proper names of the Hebrews, and the following expressions occasionally found in our English Bibles, "to live the life," "to die the death," "to sleep the sleep," etc.

The influence of the old Phœnician language, which became the dialect of the patriarchs and their posterity, is clearly discernible in those of the Greeks and Romans, both by their alphabet and in many of their words. So likewise the modern European languages are indebted to the Arabic for its invaluable system of numeration, and for many words, chiefly of a scientific character. The latter are often distinguished by the Arabic article, which we have preserved unaltered, as in algebra, alchemy, etc. We lately noticed, for the first time, that the exclamation ἰώ, which occurs in Greek and Latin authors, is of Phœnician origin, and has been preserved down to our times; for it is now used by the Arabic-speaking descendants of the old Phœnician mariners, and by the Arab children of the Syrian coast when playing at the rope-swing.

The Arabic language possesses a large body of literature which makes its acquisition valuable to the scholar. The Koran first fixed the language, and reduced it to a single dialect; it thus accomplished a work similar to that done by the English and German translations of the Bible. Yet the Koran by no means contains the purest old Arabic. The various dynasties which succeeded Mohammed on the three continents often patronized letters; so that many works exist in Arabic not only on history, poetry, and philology, but also upon chemistry, natural history, geography, and the physical sciences generally. There is likewise a considerable literature in the Persian and Turkish languages which use the same character, and have largely borrowed from the Arabic nomenclature; but it may justly be said that many of these works lack the accuracy and precise description required by modern science.*

No one who has visited the East can have failed to be struck

* Bruce, vol. vi., p. 242.

with the frequent use of proverbs among the people, as a spice to conversation or as an argument. These short and pithy sayings were highly esteemed, and treasured up, by the Hebrews. King Solomon spoke three thousand proverbs,* and the book of Proverbs probably contains the choicest of them. The curious reader will find examples of the use or origin of proverbs in the following passages: 1 Sam. x., 12; Jer. xxxi., 29; Ezek. xvi., 44; Matt. xiii., 57; Mark x., 25; Luke iv., 23; and 2 Peter ii., 22. A short list of proverbs now current in the East, not published before, will be found in Appendix A, at the close of this volume.

We have confined our remarks to the Shemitish language of the Old Testament, and have said nothing respecting the Indo-European dialect of the New, in which it was intended to be conveyed to the ends of the earth by the ever-active children of Japheth. The Greek is too well known among us to need illustration. Suffice it to say that the present Romaic is as truly a dialect of the Greek as the language of Homer, Xenophon, or Luke. There is no more reason for pronouncing the orations of Demosthenes according to the principles of the English language, than there is for uttering the dramas of Shakspeare with the tongue of a Frenchman. The knowledge of the modern Greek modulations can alone give us an adequate idea of the eloquence of St. Paul, in some of his most remarkable speeches. Moreover, the language of the New Testament is a sort of medium between classic and modern Greek, and the latter often explains terms upon which the former can not throw any light. In Acts i., 15, for instance, there is a statement respecting "the number of names" (*ὀνόματα*), *i. e.*, the number of the disciples. Classical literature throws no light upon the expression; but it is constantly met with among the moderns, who have even made of it a new word, *νομάτοι*, signifying *men*. So likewise the New Testament contains many Orientalisms, which are more fully developed in the Romaic; such, for instance, is the common mode of addressing men, *i. e.*, *παιδιὰ*, *children;* which we find in John xxi., 5.

We have already stated the fact that the Hebrews derived their alphabet from the Phœnicians, and subsequently modi-

* 1 Kings iv., 32.

fied it during their abode in Babylon. But the Samaritans, who received the Pentateuch before that period, still continue to use the old Phœnician alphabet. The modern Syriac character is also a modification of the Phœnician, which appears chiefly to consist in uniting to each other the letters which belong to the same word, while the Arabic is a further step in the same direction. The latter is often written with much grace and beauty; and as Muslims are forbidden to make representations of living things, great pains are taken to excel in calligraphy, and passages taken from the Koran and other favorite writings are tastefully carved in marble. Instead of pictures, they have upon their walls framed specimens of fine writing. Gate-ways are often ornamented with similar inscriptions, beautifully carved, and the interior of mosks and mausoleums are adorned in like manner,* the ninety-and-nine names of God being sometimes inscribed all round the walls next to the ceiling.

The Arabs write from the right hand to the left, as do all the people of Western Asia, except the Greeks and Armenians.

The Persians and Turks adopted the Arabic characters at the same time that they espoused the religion of Islam. Yet this system of writing is ill adapted to the dialects they speak, having been framed with reference to that peculiarity of the Arabic which we have already pointed out; for the consonants alone are written down in full, while the vowels are indicated, as in Hebrew, with little points or marks placed above or below. These marks are three in the Arabic, whereas the Hebrew, as now pointed, has fifteen. The vowel points of the Hebrew were invented after the captivity, and, therefore, after the people had ceased to use the Hebrew, and had adopted the Chaldee dialect. In the Arabic, also, the vowel points are not used by those who are familiar with the language, but only by such as use it as a dead tongue. The only pointed book is the Koran, for Muslims think it sinful to translate it; and the reading of it being deemed meritorious, they are obliged to use points, in order to indicate vowel sounds which their ignorance of the language does not enable them to supply. These statements are equally applicable to all the languages which use

* Job xix., 24; Jer. xvii., 1.

the Arabic or a similar character, such as the Chaldee, Syriac, Turkish, Persian, Malayan, etc. The Greek and Armenian languages have characters of their own, in which, as in ours, the vowel sounds are represented; yet they abbreviate many words by dropping out the vowels. They also represent entire words by a single letter, as is frequently seen in ancient inscriptions, and was practiced by the Jews.*

The Arabic, like the Hebrew, can not be written with a quill, much less with a steel pen; nor can they employ the style of the Romans and Greeks. The pen is made of a small reed, about a quarter of an inch in thickness, and is generally of a dark-brown color, which is cut as we do a quill, with this difference, that instead of being sharp at the point, it is broad and slanting, and is held sideways. The ink used is thick; it is made of gum, lampblack, and water, and does not corrode like ours. The writing done with this ink is said to last forever. A little roll of palm-threads, always kept in the inkstand, prevents its drying up. The latter is of brass, and occasionally of silver, while in some rare instances it is of gold. Its cover is of the same material, and it is firmly attached to a case holding pens, about six inches in length, which is stuck into the girdle, in a slanting position, so as to prevent the ink from running out, and to enable the writer to use it without removing it from his girdle. Merchants and scribes always wear such an inkstand in their belts, and it may be called the insignia of their office or trade. But when a man's occupation is stationary, confining him to a single spot, where he has a good deal of writing to do, if he be a judge, for instance, the governor of a large city, or an officer of state, he sits cross-legged in the corner of his divan, and has beside him a box, or small chest, often handsomely carved or inlaid, in which he keeps his writing materials and documents, and upon which are set, in a small tray, a variety of little porcelain cups, with their covers, containing inks of various qualities, and black or golden sand, with a bundle of pens.† In some parts of Egypt the inkstand yet consists of a small horn set up in a hole, as was done by the ancient Egyptians.‡

Our description thus far is the counterpart of what existed

* Prideaux, iii., 252. † Wilkinson, ii., 176. ‡ Curzon, p. 87.

among the Hebrews, for the word translated pen in 3 John 13, is *reed;* in the Greek, *calamos;* same as the word *kalem*, in Turkish and Arabic—their only term for pen; and in Ezek. ix., 2, "by his side" is in the Hebrew *upon his loins*, and evidently refers to the custom of carrying an inkstand in the girdle. But the ancients wrote on papyrus, a plant which still grows abundantly in the canals and ponds of Egypt, and in the marshy precincts of Hooleh or Lake Merom, in Palestine. In 2 John 12, the word translated "paper" properly means the *papyrus.* The use of the papyrus has been abandoned since the invention of paper made of cotton or linen; but modern Orientals still employ parchment for valuable documents.* In Isa. viii., 1; Jer. xxxvi., 2; Ezek. ii., 9; and iii., 1–3, the books described being rolls were doubtless written on parchment. So likewise the copy of the Law must have been of the same material, which was kept in the sanctuary, and was discovered by Hilkiah and sent to King Josiah; for it would otherwise hardly have remained legible after eight hundred and thirty years.† The ancients also wrote on tablets which were fastened together with a string, and sometimes sealed with one or more seals. Such may have been those mentioned in the Apocalypse, Rev. v., 1–3; x., 2, 8, 9. In chap. xx., 12, the book was opened, not unrolled.

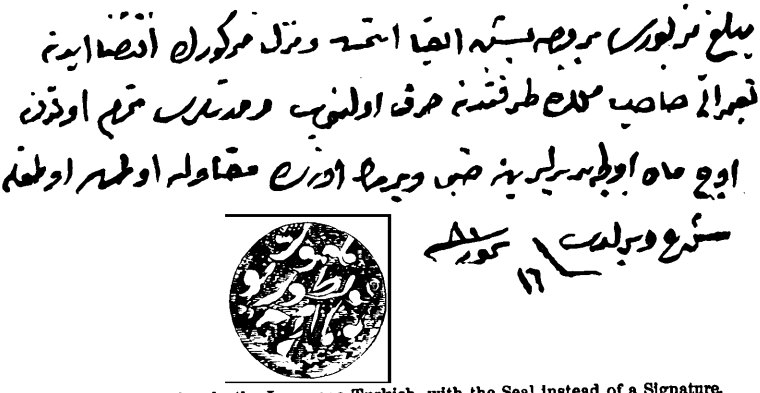
It is impossible now positively to ascertain how early paper made of cotton came into use. It was probably invented in the East, like papyrus and parchment; for it was introduced into Europe from the Spanish Moors about the thirteenth century, and they must have obtained it, as well as silk paper, from the East, cotton and silk being then produced nowhere else. The paper now used in the East is thick, in large sheets, and polished by rubbing.

The mode of writing is as follows: The sheet is ruled, not with a ruler and pencil, but by successive foldings, a margin being left at the right side of the page, and the lines being made to slant somewhat upward toward the left, unless the sheet be written on both sides, in which case they are straight. The paper is then held in the left hand, which rests upon the right knee in such a manner that the pressure of the pen upon

* 2 Tim. iv., 13.

† 2 Kings xxii., 8; 2 Chron. xxxiv., 15

the paper is sustained by two fingers of that hand. It will be seen, therefore, that an Oriental never rests his paper when writing upon a desk or table, but is content with what nature has bestowed upon every able-bodied man; a good illustration this of his independence of the mechanical contrivances to which the more civilized Occidental has become a slave.



Arabic Running-hand; the Language Turkish, with the Seal instead of a Signature.

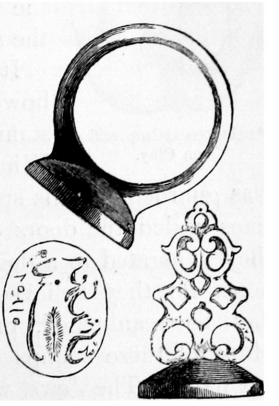
The signature of a letter or document is not written, but stamped with a seal. The latter is generally made of metal, unlike many of those used by the ancients, which were graven on costly gems.* Among the heathen the seal usually bore the image of one of their gods or some symbol.† A modern seal, however, like those of the Hebrews, is engraved with the name of its owner.‡ In the case of officials, the seal usually bears the title of office, so that they, at every new appointment, have a new seal. The practice of the sovereign, who gives the seal of state to the grand vizier when appointed to that office, is clearly alluded to in the case of Joseph.§ But the ring "put upon the hand" of the Prodigal Son‖ was an ornament worn by the wealthy, as is the custom at the present day.¶ The first act in the dismissal of a functionary by his superior consists in demanding his seal of office, and breaking it up with a hammer, in the presence of witnesses.

State documents have the name and titles of the sovereign

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* Exod. xxviii., 9–11. † Clarke, "Travels," p. 195. ‡ Exod. xxviii., 21.
§ Gen. xli., 42. ‖ Luke xv., 22. ¶ James ii., 2.

inscribed at the top, in a peculiar style, called the "tourah," or imperial cipher. They are sealed by the minister of state. The seal is stamped in the following manner: Some ink is placed with the pen upon the end of the little finger, and rubbed on the face of the seal; the spot on the paper which is to be stamped is then wet with the tongue, and, resting against the index finger of the left hand, the seal is firmly pressed upon it, leaving a clear impression upon the paper. When a man has no seal, he inks the end of his finger, and, pressing it upon the paper, his name is then written by the side of this mark. To give great weight to a letter, it is sometimes marked with blood, or burned at the four corners.*



Modern Seals.

The importance of the seal is illustrated by the fact that a man never parts with it except in extraordinary cases, carrying it always in his bosom, fastened by a cord around his neck or to his garment, or else in the form of a signet-ring.† In the case of Judah, in Gen. xxxviii., 18, the value of the ring consisted in its being a "signet" bearing the owner's name; and this was the very reason why Tamar wished to get possession of it. She asked for the other articles only lest her real object should be discovered. Judah, on the other hand, thought it was asked as the surest means of obtaining the kid, since no man is willing long to leave his signet, which is his signature, in the hands of a stranger.

An impression of one's seal is sometimes made and given to a friend or an agent, as a proof that he is fully authorized to act in the name of the owner. It is a letter of recommendation or of credit, limited only by the capacity of the principal.‡

The ancients, however, appear to have stamped their seals upon clay, which subsequently hardened.§ We have ourselves picked up such impressions among the ruins of ancient cities.

* Churchill, "Lebanon," vol. iv., p. 150.

† Gen. xxxviii., 18; 1 Kings xxi., 8; Esth. iii., 10, 12; viii., 2.

‡ Perkins, p. 186.

§ Job xxxviii., 14.



Ancient seal Impression on Clay.

They were in an excellent state of preservation, and had evidently been fastened to the original document by a string, which, with the parchment, had long since yielded to the action of time.

It was not letters and documents alone, however, that were anciently or are now stamped with the impression of a seal. Whatever was intended not to be opened was guarded by this species of talisman. The ancient Egyptians sealed the doors of the tombs of their ancestors, whom they venerated to a degree equaled only by the modern Chinese; for they believed that their bodies would at a future day be reanimated, provided they were preserved entire. Many of these stamps upon clay are still found at the present day.* The Jews, who believed in the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body, guarded the tombs of their dead with the same jealous care as the modern Orientals, and they doubtless sometimes sealed them with a signet, as was done in the case of our Lord.† The sealing of the mouth of the lion's den, into which the prophet Daniel was cast, with the king's "own signet, and with the signet of his lords,"‡ still further explains the purpose of such an act, and shows that the custom extended to Chaldea. At the present day, when an Oriental dies, his property is sealed by the authorities, and the seal is not removed until the judge is ready to divide the inheritance. Bags of money are sent by private or public post, with the simple precaution of stamping them with the owner's seal, which none but highway robbers dare to violate.

Intimately connected with this practice is the custom by which the votaries of particular divinities bore special marks indicative of their spiritual allegiance. The secret society of the Thugs of India bear a small mark tattooed upon the arm; and those who visit the Church of the Resurrection at Jerusalem during Easter have a similar mark upon their left wrist; while the worshipers of Vishnoo and Shiva make a stripe of red paint upon their heads on special occasions, by which they

* Wilkinson, vol. ii., p. 364. † Matt. xxvii., 66. ‡ Dan. vi., 17.

are distinguished from other men. We thus find an explanation of that interesting passage in Revelation vii., 3, which describes the "servants of God" as "sealed in their foreheads" before the destruction of his enemies. So is likewise the marking of the votaries of the beast "on their right hands or on their foreheads."* The men of Jerusalem, "that sighed and cried for all the abominations that were done in the midst thereof," were also similarly marked.† The same idea led to the "boring of a slave's ear," as a sign of perpetual bondage.‡

The ancient form of books was more varied than the modern, if we may judge from the pictures found on the walls of Pompeii, and from the descriptions of ancient authors. Many of their documents, and even books, were rolled up on one or two rollers.§ It is easy to see, however, that such a form was very cumbersome, and fit only for an age in which the art of reading and writing was monopolized by a few of the clergy, or possessed at most by a particular class of people. Modern books are always made of separate sheets, bound together at the back as in Europe, whether they be of parchment or of paper. They are often tastefully illuminated, richly bound, and kept in a case or sachel, elaborately wrought in gold, pearls, and precious stones. This is particularly the case with the Koran, upon the embroidered wrapper of a single copy of which we have counted more than four hundred gems; the written characters are often in black and red ink, with occasional sentences in letters of gold. Manuscript volumes are sometimes met in Western Asia which would grace the finest library in Europe. A convent at Jerusalem contains among its books "one hundred manuscript volumes on *vellum*, one of which has the index and the beginning of each gospel written in gold letters on purple vellum, and contains curious illustrations." On Mount Athos are many valuable books, kept in libraries, which the monks are unable to read; and among the rest, "six rolls of parchment, each ten inches wide and ten feet long."‖ But it is usually the special decrees, or firmans, of the sovereigns which are written in the most elaborate manner, being sometimes inscribed on parchment two or three feet long,

* Rev. xiii., 16, 17. † Ezek. ix., 4. ‡ Deut. xv., 16, 17.
§ Jer. xxxvi., 14; Ezek. ii., 9, 10. ‖ Curzon, pp. 161, 346.

and fourteen inches wide, and written with red, blue, and black ink; the names of God and the king are traced with fine gold-dust, mingled with a little water, containing gum arabic in solution.*

The art of printing was quite unknown in the East until a few years ago, and even now the Christian population alone properly appreciate the power and value of the press. The Koran is never printed. There is a class of men whose sole occupation consists in copying it upon parchment, and they are supposed to be possessed of a peculiar sanctity. The "scribes" referred to in the New Testament constituted a similar class among the Jews.† It is not such a class exactly which is alluded to in the Old Testament; there "the scribe" means a secretary, often a high officer of state.‡ Copies of the law were rare before the Babylonish captivity,§ during which some of the pious Hebrews devoted themselves to the study of the law, and their literary labors acquired for them the name of scribes.‖ The synagogue was established soon after the return from the captivity, and the demand created for copies of the Scriptures gave rise to the numerous body of scribes, whose occupation enabled them to acquire a considerable knowledge of the law. It is now a custom with many in Western Asia to carry a book in the bosom, which is read at odd moments. This is not always an indication of a desire for improvement or instruction. These books, more commonly, consist of collections of prayers or legends; and the Druses, a sort of Arab Jesuits, who are ever seeking to pass themselves off for Muslims, often carry a small copy of the Koran in a case, conspicuously suspended from some part of their person.

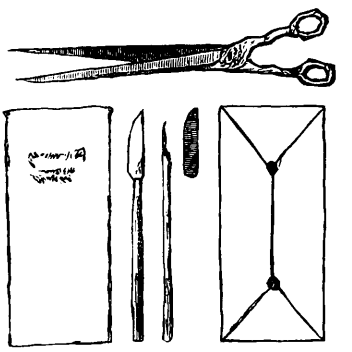
Simple documents of importance, such as firmans, or special orders from the government, are folded and put up in a case of tin or more costly material, and hung by a cord across the shoulder. The bearers of imperial orders or dispatches carry them in a richly embroidered case, suspended from the neck upon the breast; they wear a special uniform, and are armed with a sword and staff of office.

Letters are folded and put up in envelopes which, instead of

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* Chardin, vol. iii., p. 160.
† Matt. xxiii., 14, 15.
‡ 2 Sam. viii., 17; 1 Kings iv., 3.
§ 2 Kings xxii., 8.
‖ Ezra vii., 6.

being opened lengthwise, receive their contents at one end, and are closed with two wax seals instead of one. The address is written across the width of the envelope. A messenger carries such a letter on his head, between the cap and its lining. This may perhaps explain the origin of the answer uniformly given by an Oriental to any command of a superior, "Upon my head."



Sealed Letter (Esther iii., 12), Penknife, Scissors, and Pen.

The art of writing is possessed by few in the East, and fewer still are acquainted with those forms which long usage has connected with the idea of a proper mode of addressing persons of different ranks; hence a class exists all over the East who secure a livelihood by writing petitions, letters, and other documents for the illiterate. They sit in a public place, in front of a conspicuous mosk, or of some court or hall of justice, and their whole stock in trade consists of writing materials, a little box in which they are stowed, and a rug on which they sit. The documents they write are stereotyped in style, and the gist of the matter is usually found at the close, after a profusion of compliments, or even in a slanting line of writing upon the margin, which corresponds to the postscript of the Occidental. These "scribes" are generally old men, broken-down schoolmasters, government clerks, or priests, many of whom wear the Oriental spectacles, which consist of two large round glasses without bows, and worn on the tip of the nose.

CHAPTER III.

THE TENT, AND NOMAD LIFE.

THE inhabitants of Western Asia have, from time immemorial, been divided into two classes, according as they dwell in permanent or in movable habitations. This distinction is not local, as many suppose. It is stated in Gen. iv., 17, 20, that Cain built the first city, and that Jabal was the father of such as dwell in tents and of such as have cattle; and this early classification of mankind took place within the limits of a comparatively small region equally adapted to agricultural as to pastoral pursuits. The passage above cited also implies that pastoral pursuits have been adhered to by certain races, who have engaged in them for a succession of ages. This fact is amply sustained by historical evidence, and the tradition of modern nomads point to no period when they led a different mode of life.

These tribes are now met with in all parts of Western Asia, and perform their regular migrations through the richest portions of the country, from the Caucasus to the Indian Ocean, and from the Caspian to the Ægean Sea. Nor does such a manner of life imply barbarism, or a lack of that civilization which is found among their neighbors who occupy the cities of the same region. This relation is a reproduction of that which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob bore to the Canaanites that dwelt in the Promised Land, and which the reader can understand only by a careful perusal of the entire biography of those patriarchs, as contained in the book of Genesis. Like them, the modern nomads keep up a constant and friendly intercourse with the people of the villages and cities, exchanging the products of their herds and flocks for articles of manufacture or consumption,* and even, not unfrequently, intermarrying with them when no obstacle of a religious character lies in the way.†

* Gen. xlii., 2, 3.

† Gen. xxvi., 34; xxxiv., 3, 9, 14–16.

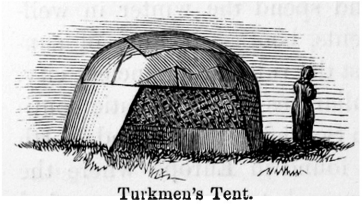
The Shah of Persia belongs to a tribe of nomads, which constitute the flower of his cavalry.

The pastoral tribes of Western Asia traverse every spring the same tracts of country, as they move to the same camping-grounds in higher and cooler regions. The latter are called *yaïlah*, or *yelak*, and consist of elevated plains or plateaus, with springs of water and abundance of grass for the flocks. They are highly prized, and sometimes fought for by rival tribes.* They descend in the autumn, and spend the winter in well-sheltered valleys, under their tents, booths, or huts of sun-dried bricks, and sometimes amidst the ruins of an ancient city. They constitute one of the peculiarities of the Asiatic continent, whence they have spread to Southern Russia, and North Africa. Nothing of the kind is found in Europe, where the miserable gypsies, the nearest approach to a nomad race, find it difficult to maintain their wandering habits; and even in North America, where the roving red Indian had so long possessed the entire land, the wigwam is fast vanishing before the ever-advancing log-cabin and farm-house. In Western Asia time has wrought less change in the habits of the nomad than in those of any other class of people. They are not affected by the political changes which are apt so greatly to modify the condition of the inhabitants of cities; for when an enemy invades the country in which they dwell, they flee before him to their secure retreats, like the wave before the blast, and return to their wonted haunts as soon as the enemy has gone by. The study of their life and habits, therefore, is of great importance to the Biblical scholar, for he will find in them a striking delineation of the nomads of ancient times. Abraham and the patriarchs led precisely the life of the Bedawin now inhabiting the same land, and though their posterity occupied settled habitations in the land of Goshen during two hundred years, yet they again led a tent life for forty years in the wilderness. They indeed, for the most part, became cultivators of the soil when they had conquered the land of promise, and exchanged the tent for permanent dwellings and the fortified cities of their vanquished enemies. But from the time of Joshua to that of Saul, the constitution of Jewish society ap-

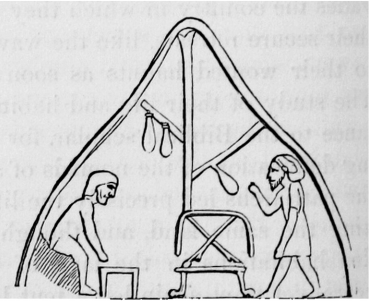
* Isa. xlix., 9–11.

proached nearer to the patriarchal than to any other;* and it is this system that now prevails among the Arab tribes of the desert. There are, also, many allusions to tent life at subsequent periods, respecting whose identity with the habits of the modern Arab there is no difference of opinion among Oriental travelers.

The form of the tent used by different tribes of nomads constitutes a striking illustration of the tenacity with which pastoral peoples adhere to the traditions of their fathers. The Turkmens of Asia Minor, for instance, live under the same kind of tent as is used to this day by their kinsmen in Tartary. We have historic evidence that they came into the country about a thousand years ago, yet their tent is quite unlike that of the other nomads of Western Asia. It is circular, about twelve feet in diameter, and is constructed by driving firmly into the ground, in a circle, a number of long elastic branches, split in two, which are bent toward the centre, and there fastened together. Large pieces of felt are then spread upon this frame-work, in such a manner as to shed the rain. The tent has thus the shape of half a sphere, of little more than a man's height. A similar tent is represented on the sculptures of Nineveh. The form and materials of the Arab tent are also doubtless of the greatest antiquity. It is made of goat's hair cloth,† always black‡ or of a dark brown, about three-fourths of a yard wide, manufactured by the women of the household,§ and cut in long strips, which are stitched together at the edges until the desired width is obtained. This tent-cloth possesses the double advantage of being water-proof and of absorbing the

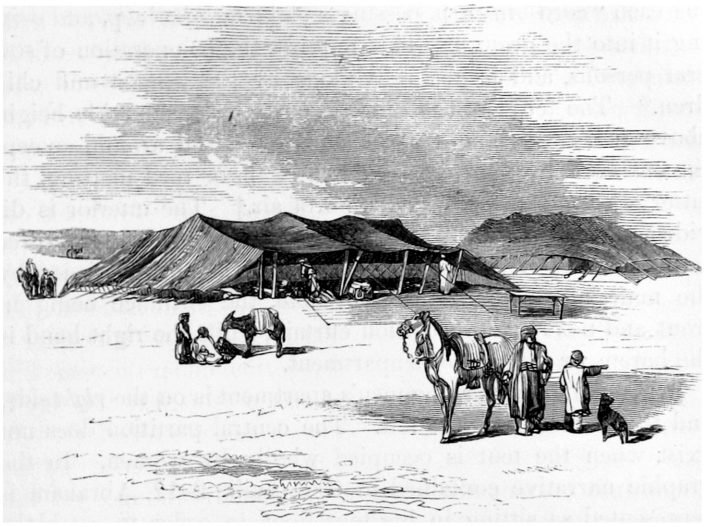


Turkmen's Tent.



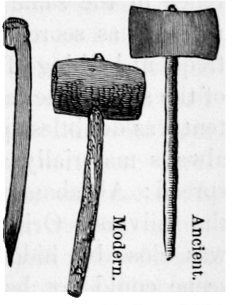
Ancient Tent. Assyrian Sculpture.

* Judg. xvii., 6; xxi., 25.
† Exod. xxxvi., 14.
‡ Cant. i., 5.
§ Exod. xxxv., 26.



Arab Tent. (Isa. xiii., 20.)

sun's rays, and it is thus actually cooler than the white tent of the more civilized traveler. The strips of the cloth run in the direction of the tent's length, for it is in shape a parallelogram, with the door or entrance at one of the long sides. It is supported by wooden posts, called pillars,* varying in number, so that there are sometimes as many as twenty-four; the usual number, however, is nine, set up in three rows across the width of the tent. At intervals along the border of the tent-cloth are fastened ropes, which are attached to the tent-pins by their loops. These pins are wooden stakes, or pegs, sometimes called "nails," about three feet in length, with a notch at the thicker end. They are driven firmly into the ground, being "set in a sure place,"† by means of a wooden mallet or hammer.‡ In setting up a tent, the edge of the cloth is stretched by pull-



Tent-pin, or Hook, and Mallet. (Judg. iv., 21.)

* Exod. xxvi., 32.

† Eccles. xii., 11; Isa. xxii., 23. The "master of assemblies" is the sheikh, who orders the gathering together of the tent dwellers, and the pitching of the encampment.

‡ Judg. iv., 21.

ing each "cord" in turn, passing a stake into its loop, and driving it into the ground. This requires the co-operation of several persons, and is generally done by the women and children.* The tent-cloth is thus raised to a considerable height above the ground, and the space is closed all around, except the entrance, by "curtains" of hair-cloth, or reed matting, the latter allowing a freer circulation of air.† The interior is divided into two equal parts by a curtain hung upon the three centre pillars. In Mesopotamia, the left hand is occupied by the male members of the household, the entrance being in front and next to the partition curtain, while the right hand is the harem, or the women's apartment.

In Arabia, however, the men's apartment is on the *right* side, and the women's on the left. The central partition does not exist when the tent is occupied wholly by women. In the graphic narrative contained in Gen. xviii., 2–12, Abraham is represented as sitting in his tent door, in order to catch the breeze in the heat of the day, and hastening to entreat the passing strangers to withdraw from the burning sun, have the dust washed off from their soiled feet, and be refreshed with an improvised meal. All these circumstances are still of daily occurrence in the same region; hospitality is as urgent, the sun's rays are as scorching, the sandals worn upon the feet render frequent bathing of the feet as grateful, and the meal consisting of the same materials is prepared with the same celerity. The tent was doubtless pitched close to a tree, whose grateful shade always materially adds to its coolness. There was the meal spread; Abraham waited upon his guests, in accordance with the universal Oriental custom; and Sarah, though invisible, was close by, hidden only by the tent curtain. The whole scene could not have been better described had it occurred among the Arabs of to-day. The men's apartment is the place where the passing guest and visitor are usually received. Carpets are spread upon the ground, and cushions or camel-packs arranged for their accommodation upon three sides of the space between the two rows of pillars. Beyond the last row, the end of the tent is often occupied by favorite mares and their colts. A fire of camel's manure smoulders in the centre of the

* Isa. liv., 2; Jer. x., 20.

† Jer. iv., 20; xlix., 29.

divan, with a coffee-pot set upon it, and often, especially when there is company, a dusky form crouches on the ground, busied in burning coffee, grinding it in a little brass hand-mill, or pounding it in a wooden mortar, pouring the frothing fluid from the long-handled pot into the tiny cup, and handing it to the guests, who fill up the pauses in the conversation with the never-ending fumes of their pipes. In the women's apartment are the provisions of the household, the culinary operations being superintended, and even performed, by the mistress herself.*

It is rare to see solitary tents. In the desert they are often arranged in a circle or quadrangle, so that the cattle can be gathered together, at night, into the central space, and thus be more effectually defended against thieving marauders. This arrangement appears to be of very ancient date; it is called by the Arabs a "dowar," and in the Old Testament "hazerim."† It exists not only among nomads generally, but is to be met with where permanent habitations have been substituted for the tent, while the chief occupation of the people has continued to be the tending of flocks and herds. Among the Circassians, for instance, the houses are built of very light materials, and there are neither villages nor towns, properly speaking. A chieftain resides with his family and his slaves in a cluster of houses, arranged in a circle, and shaded by the dense foliage of numerous trees, while the central space is appropriated to the many cattle and horses, which are gathered there every night, and let out every morning.

The furniture of the Arab tent is simple, but amply supplies every want. There are copper pots, kettles, and frying-pans for cooking purposes, and wooden pails or bowls for milking the goats, sheep, cows, and she-camels.‡ There are skin bags, or "bottles," suspended from the posts of the tent, whose mouths are sometimes kept open by three sticks placed in triangular position, and which are used as churns for making butter, or in the manufacture of sweet curds, white cheese, and curdled milk, or *leben*.§ This last preparation of milk is greatly esteemed by all Orientals, and doubtless dates back to a high antiqui-

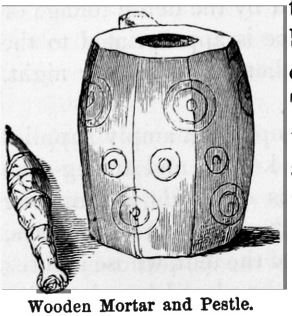
* Gen. xviii., 6; xxvii., 17.

† Deut. ii., 23; in Gen. xxv., 16, the English version has "towns."

‡ Job xxi., 24. § Judg. iv., 19.

ty. It is believed by the Arabs to have been divinely revealed to Abraham, who handed down the knowledge of it to the world through his posterity; while others assert that when Hagar, with her child, was sent away by Abraham,* and was perishing with thirst in the wilderness,† an angel brought her a refreshing draught of this "Oriental nectar," which has ever since been held in the highest estimation by all true Ishmaelites. *Leben*, however, seems to be well known and fully appreciated throughout Tartary, and among the aboriginal tribes who dwell in the neighborhood of the Caucasus. It is always kept ready for use in the tent of the Arab, a large dish of it, usually made of camel's milk, being often set near the entrance of the tent, where all who are thirsty may bend the head and drink. *Leben* is called in the Hebrew Scriptures *khemah*, which our English version wrongly translates *butter*, and sometimes *milk*. The following passages are acknowledged to contain references to this beverage: Gen. xviii., 8; Judg. v., 25; 2 Sam. xvii., 29; Job xx., 17; xxix., 6; Isa. vii., 22.

Besides the above-mentioned articles found in the Arab's tent, there may be seen the entire skins of animals—of goats, cattle, and camels—taken off in the manner already described, which are used for carrying water. As the Arab's tent is apt to be smoky in the cold weather, the skin bottle, hung upon the tent pillar, becomes dried and black with soot, a fit object for the comparison contained in Psa. cxix., 83. The tent also contains the mortar in which the Arabs pound their grain, and a pair of millstones, turned by the hand, with which they grind it;‡ the kneading-troughs,§ in which they prepare their bread; and the portable oven, already described (page 90), which, in the desert, is generally heated with dry grass, thrown in by handfuls, no other suitable fuel being procurable.‖ Their thin cakes of bread are often baked on the hot embers, or on iron plates over the fire. There are



Wooden Mortar and Pestle.
(Numb. xi., 8.)

* Gen. xxi., 14. † Gen. xxi., 16–19. ‡ Numb. xi., 8.
§ Exod. xii., 34. ‖ Matt. vi., 30.

besides several articles made of the same goat's-hair cloth as the tent cover; such are bags for wheat, barley, millet, rice, beans, and other like provisions for the household. These stores are often the fruit of their own sowing, but are also obtained from the towns and villages on the border, in exchange for the produce of their own flocks and herds. They are, however, acquired by robbery whenever an opportunity offers.

In person the Bedawy* is well-built, muscular, often tall, though thin, with regular features, a slight beard, and a complexion bronzed by heat and exposure. His raven locks, long and glossy, are often shaven around the temples, in accordance with the Mohammedan requirement. His eye is black, piercing, and restless. His dress simple, consisting of a cotton shirt, sometimes white, but oftener blue, whose loose folds descend to the ankles, and which is confined with a leathern girdle about the loins.† This shirt, tunic, or robe is open in front down to the waist, and serves as a spacious and most convenient pocket, where the wearer stows away all manner of things. This arrangement of the garment is common to all Orientals, and is called "the bosom;" and we have an example of it in the case of Moses in the desert.‡ Besides the girdle, however, both sexes wear from infancy a leathern girdle around the naked waist, adorned with amulets, and also with shells (*cyprœa*). Neither sex wear drawers, either under or over the shirt, which usually constitutes the entire wardrobe of both; and they are ridiculed by their neighbors for "going naked." This is also the custom among the poorer class in Egypt. It would seem to have been the practice of the Hebrews during the Exodus, if we may judge from the urgent repetition of the command that priests wear "linen breeches to cover their nakedness, reaching from their loins to their thighs, when they come into the tabernacle, lest they die."§ A woolen cloak, generally of camel's hair, in broad stripes, brown and white, is thrown loosely over the shoulders of the desert Arab, and is his only covering at night.‖ With it he also improvises a tent, while traveling under the burning sun; he

* *Bedawy* means the inhabitant of the desert; plural, *Bedawin*. *Saracen* has the same meaning; it is derived from *zara*, *saara*, desert.

† Matt. iii., 4.

‡ Exod. iv., 6; Luke vi., 38.

§ Exod. xxviii., 42, 43.

‖ Exod. xxii., 26, 27.

stops, panting with the heat, and spreads his cloak on the points of his spears stuck into the ground, and waits for the evening. His head-dress consists of a gay handkerchief of cotton, or of silk mixed with cotton, striped red and yellow, whose border is ornamented with a long braided fringe and tassels, worn in such a manner that one corner hangs loose on the back, and two others fall on the shoulders, while the folds of the fourth shade the forehead and face. This handkerchief is bound around the head with a thick cord of brown camel's hair, considered the best safeguard against a sun-stroke, and thus floats in the wind, or its folds are wrapped about the face to protect it from the sun or conceal it from an enemy. The Bedawy generally goes barefoot, but, when he can afford it, buys from the town, or steals from the passing traveler, a pair of red morocco shoes or boots, usually very large, and with the toes turning up like a skate; or he makes himself a pair of sandals, generally of camel's skin, which he binds with thongs around his foot. These sandals are always made after one model, and appear to derive their form from high antiquity. We have abundant evidence from the Bible narratives that this identical form of sandal was long worn by the Hebrews. The word *naal*, signifying sandal, is translated *shoe* in Exod. iii., 5; Deut. xxv., 9; xxix., 5; Josh. v., 15; Ruth iv., 7, 8; 1 Kings ii., 5; Isa. xx., 2; Ezek. xxiv., 17. The word *latchet* also indicates the sandal wherever it occurs, as in Gen. xiv., 23; Isa. v., 27; Mark i., 7. All of the foregoing description of the Arab costume is not applicable to the poorer class, whose sole garment is the loose cotton shirt or tunic already mentioned, generally the worse for wear.

The Arabs, like the Israelites of old, are divided into distinct tribes, which take their name from their earliest progenitor. The Beni-shammar, for example, are the sons of Shammar, as in Hebrew the Israelites are called Beni-yacob.* We have a similar example in the Highland clans of Scotland, who are called the MacGregors, the MacDonalds, etc., Mac being equivalent to Beni. There are always in a tribe certain families of noble blood that are very exclusive in their alliances, and succeed thereby in keeping within restricted limits the possession

* Mal. iii., 6.

of wealth and influence. They make a sort of compromise with the leveling tendencies of the Koran by marrying several wives, over whom rules the one of purest lineage, dispensing the provisions of the household, and enjoying the prerogative of preparing the meals destined for her husband and his guests.* When the husband is wealthy each wife has her own separate tent, thus diminishing the frequently recurring divisions and disputes.† In each of these tents the wife reigns supreme, surrounded and waited on by slaves and women of inferior rank, while the children of both sexes run and roll about in a state of nature, wearing simply an amulet to ward off the evil eye, or a few coins fastened in their braided hair.‡ We find a parallel to this system in the life of the patriarchs. Abraham sent his chief servant to Padan-aram to take a wife unto his son Isaac from his country and his kindred, and Isaac sent Jacob thither on a similar errand on his own account.§ In the household of the latter, the children were placed upon the same footing from a sort of general agreement, but Rachel was the favorite wife,‖ and her eldest son Joseph received from his father his only special bequests.¶ The sons of Sarah and Rebecca, moreover, inherited their father's goods, while the sons of the concubines received only "gifts" during the lifetime of their father.

The tribes of the desert are governed by what is called the patriarchal system. The head of the household is absolute lord and master of the lives and property of every member of his family, so that had Abraham slain his son Isaac, he would not have transcended the authority accorded to every father by the nomad tribes.** We have another evidence of this in the story of Mesha, king of Moab, who was "a sheep-master," and who, being hard pressed by the Israelites, actually offered "his eldest son, that should have reigned in his stead," for a burnt-offering to obtain the favor of his god.†† It is worthy of notice that the public "indignation" was not directed against Mesha himself, but "against Israel," by whom he had been driven to such straits.

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* Gen. xviii., 6.

† Gen. xxxi., 33.

‡ Layard gives us a striking description of a Bedawy beauty, "Nineveh," vol. i., p. 99.

§ Gen. xxiv., 3, 4; xxviii., 1, 2.

‖ Gen. xxix., 30; xxx., 15.

¶ Gen. xxxvii., 3; xlviii., 22.

** Gen. xxii., 10.

†† 2 Kings iii., 27.

A tribe is composed of independent households, united by ties of consanguinity, and dwelling in the same region, or moving together in their migrations. The most influential and wealthiest member of an ancient family is selected as the leader of the tribe, and he exercises a sort of authority over them.

It must not be supposed, however, that the office of sheikh, or emir, bears any resemblance to that of a monarch, or head of any government existing elsewhere, unless we except the sachems of the North American Indians. There is no oath of allegiance nor claim to obedience; every head of a household recognizes and follows the common leader only as long as he finds it for his advantage, and whenever dissatisfied he waits upon some other member of the tribe, and follows his leadership; and so it frequently happens that a few households leave their own tribe and join themselves to another whose sheikh they prefer. As might be expected, a tribe with all its tents, flocks, and herds, covers a great deal of ground, and the men on horseback are continually moving to and fro in small companies of three or four to a dozen, conveying the orders of the emir directing the general movements, to prevent interference with one another, looking out for suitable camping-grounds, especially watching against marauders, and on the alert for plunder. They often lie in wait behind a rise of ground, or near a fountain or well, and the only safety for the traveler is in paying toll to some of them to act as an escort.* The principal sheikhs, on the other hand, scour the desert with larger bodies of men, well mounted and armed, in whatever direction circumstances may require. The annual movements of the Bedawin are similar to the yearly migrations of the birds, as they issue every spring from the inhabited portions of Arabia, and move northward to Mesopotamia, and across the Euphrates and Tigris to the foot of the mountains of Koordistan, while westward they spread to the very gates of Damascus and Aleppo, and to the shores of the Mediterranean, and eastward to the walls of Bagdad and the frontiers of Persia. The living tide returns every autumn, laden with the spoils of caravans and the wheat and barley of agricultural districts, ever triumphing, while "their hand is against every man, and every

* Lynch, p. 392.

man's hand against them."* The countries bordering on the desert lie completely at their mercy, and preserve food enough to sustain their population only by paying an annual tribute to these wild marauders. They have been repeatedly known to commit their depredations at the very gates of the fenced cities. Not long ago the Beni-shammar carried off twelve hundred sheep from under the walls of Mossul, and the pasha having sent five hundred soldiers, with two cannon, in pursuit, they turned and beat a hasty retreat as soon as they saw the shaking of the spears of the dreaded sons of the desert. The ancestors of these wild robbers were as troublesome to the Israelites† as they are to their neighbors at the present time. The name Bedawin, by which they are now called, signifies "the inhabitants of the desert;" they, however, like the other branch of the Abrahamic family, comprise several distinct tribes, of which the Enezeh are the most northern, always the most ready to advance in the spring, and the last to return in the autumn. The strength of this tribe alone may be inferred from the fact that their emir, Sheikh Mohammed ed Dolhy, can muster a force of ten thousand horsemen, and receives a yearly tribute from the Turkish government to keep his Bedawin in check. Other desert tribes count no less than thirty thousand horsemen.‡

The Bedawin have always been celebrated for their hospitality, a quality rendered all the more conspicuous by their dishonesty, treachery, and cruelty. Their oral laws or customs are very stringent on this subject, so much so that men who are liable to suffer from the revenge of individuals escape harm by contriving, for instance, to eat bread and salt in the tent of their enemy. The ideas entertained by these people respecting the duty of hospitality interpose a great and salutary check upon their lawless propensities, and especially upon that law of retaliation which requires the nearest relation of a murdered man to avenge his death upon his murderer, thus engendering "blood feuds," which often last for a generation. Indeed, were it not for the powerful influence of this tent law of hospitality, the desert could not be trodden, most of the year, by any but the Arabs themselves. A young friend of ours,

* Gen. xvi., 12. † Judg. vi., 2–6, 11. ‡ Tavernier, p. 53.

having ventured upon an excursion to the south-east of Aleppo with two companions, suddenly descried, at a short distance, a considerable company of well-mounted Arabs, who immediately gave them chase. Away they went, pursuers and pursued, all equally well mounted and skilled in the management of their steeds, for the disparity of their numbers was such that resistance was out of the question. Away they went, flying over the slightly undulating plain, until a cluster of black tents appeared in the distance, and all made for this spot—the Englishmen as the only place of safety, and the Arabs to cut them off. Fortunately for the former, they succeeded in outstripping their pursuers, and reaching the tents just in time to leap off their saddles, and, leaning over the large bowl of *leben*, to swallow a refreshing draught, when their pursuers were upon them. But the people of the encampment were on the alert. They immediately set up a shout, and drove off the baffled horsemen, though they belonged to their own tribe.

The Arab, however, is passionate, and under the influence of anger or hatred will sometimes break the laws of hospitality, and even trample upon the most solemn oaths.* Heber, the husband of Jael, who "smote Sisera," was a Kenite, belonging to a nomadic tribe, and had wandered to Canaan. The conduct of his wife indicates that he strongly sympathized with his kinsmen, the Hebrews, to whom he was related by his descent from Jethro, priest of Midian, Moses's father-in-law. Jael seems to have laid her plan as soon as she perceived Sisera flying, and, to allay his fears, she gave him *leben* to drink, instead of water, for which he asked. She transgressed the laws of hospitality, but in doing so she only acted as any Bedawy Arab might now act under similar circumstances. Take, for instance, the story of Sofuk, the sheikh of the great tribe of the Shammar. He had been a noted chief of the tribe for many years, obtaining the title of King of the Desert, and having strengthened his influence by carrying off and marrying Amsha, the daughter of Hassan, sheikh of the Tai, who had been the theme of Arab poets for her beauty and her noble blood. Sofuk's conduct toward his adherents growing more and more tyrannical, they gradually left him, and pitched their

* Judg. iv., 17–22.

tents around that of his cousin, Nejris. He could not brook this humiliation, and employed expostulation, violence, and every wile, but all in vain; nothing could induce the wild children of the desert to return to his authority. He invited Nejris to an interview; but as the latter could not trust his treacherous rival, he sent him his son, Ferhan, to whom he pledged himself by solemn oath that no harm was intended. Nejris, to show his confidence in Ferhan, declared that he would accompany him alone, upon his mare, to his father's tent. They had scarcely reached it, however, when they both clearly saw the treachery about to be perpetrated. The tent was filled with blood-thirsty adherents of Sofuk, whom he had called together to aid him in consummating the work of revenge. Nejris was no sooner seated than Sofuk began to address him with invectives, to which he fearlessly responded. Upon this Sofuk sprang to his feet, and, drawing his sword, rushed upon him. Nejris, unarmed, cast himself upon the protection of an uncle, who had the baseness to hold him down while Sofuk cut his throat. Ferhan nearly lost his life at the hand of his infuriated father in the vain attempt to save his relative and guest. He now stood at the door of the tent rending his garments, and calling down curses upon the head of his father for violating the laws of hospitality, and the latter was with difficulty prevented from striking him down with his reeking sword. The Shammar were not won back to Sofuk by this act of treachery, and he, ere long, himself fell a victim to the arts he had employed to destroy his rival. He was murdered by a party of Turkish soldiers, sent ostensibly to aid him, and his head was carried in triumph to the Pasha of Bagdad.*

As the nomads have no settled habitation, the remains of their dead are not collected in cemeteries, as those of the inhabitants of cities, but are buried in the wilderness wherever the survivors may happen to be.† They are not, however, wholly indifferent as to the locality, for they usually prefer the neighborhood of a well or fountain, from the fact, perhaps, of their habitually encamping at such spots. In portions of the country where trees occur, whether in clumps or alone, the dead are buried beneath their shade.‡ When, however, any

* Layard's "Nineveh," vol. i., p. 108. † Gen. xxxv., 19. ‡ Gen. xxxv., 8.

particular locality has become sacred to the nomads by the interment of several of their people, they prefer to bury upon the same spot, and thus a collection of graves is formed almost amounting to a cemetery. Such may be seen in all regions frequented by these people. The graves are usually marked by a rude stone or the fragment of an ancient ruin, among which may sometimes be seen a monument of a more elaborate character.* The nomadic tribes hold in special reverence the tombs of such of their people as were reputed saints, and when passing by invariably stop to repeat their prayers upon the sacred spot. These clusters of graves usually contain family groups, and the dead are brought from considerable distances to be "buried with their fathers."†

Allusion has already been made to the influence exerted by the nomadic life of their progenitors upon the manners and customs of the Hebrews. We shall hereafter have repeated occasion to refer to this subject, and will here simply remark that all the people dwelling on the east side of Jordan depended for their subsistence, through all their history, chiefly upon the flocks and herds they tended. Their country was better adapted to pastoral than to agricultural pursuits.‡ It, moreover, lay open to the invasions of the wild tribes of the desert. They had, indeed, strongly-fortified cities,§ comparatively small in size, and scattered over the country, which served as places of refuge for their cattle, as well as for their "wives and little ones," on the appearance of an enemy.‖ The patriarch Job dwelt in this land, and his wealth consisted of immense herds of sheep, cattle, camels, and she-asses, as well as slaves who were engaged in keeping them; yet he dwelt not in tents, but in permanent habitations, together with his numerous household.¶ The principal wealth of the Midianites when they were destroyed by Moses consisted of cattle and flocks.** The Moabites also were keepers of sheep and herds;†† and the Idumeans seem to have been engaged in similar occupations, as were also the Amorites, and especially the inhabitants of the land of Bashan, celebrated for its fine pastures, and proverbially famous for its fine cattle.‡‡

* Gen. xxxv., 20. † Gen. xlix., 29–31; l., 13. ‡ Numb. xxxii., 4.
§ 1 Kings iv., 13. ‖ Numb. xxxii., 17, 26. ¶ Job i., 4, 10, 18, 19.
** Numb. xxxi., 32–34. †† 2 Kings iii., 4. ‡‡ Psa. xxii., 12; Amos iv., 1.

All this "east country" was overrun by the Israelites on their way to Canaan, from Edom on the south to the border of the Syrian province of Damascus on the north. They captured the cities, and put all the inhabitants to the sword, with the exception of the young girls, and carried off all their spoil. The tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, had adhered to the pastoral habits of their ancestors, and obtained permission from Moses to occupy the portion of the conquered country lying east of the Jordan and the Sea of Galilee, on account of its being better adapted to their mode of life than the land which lay on the west.* The two and a half tribes continued to follow pastoral occupations, dwelling partly in tents,† and extended their border—for they were "valiant men, men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow, and skillful in war"‡—on the north to Mount Hermon, and on the east to the entering in of "the wilderness from the river Euphrates, because their cattle were multiplied in the land of Gilead,"§ until their removal into the land of Assyria by Tilgath-pilneser, king of Nineveh.‖ In New Testament times, the people who dwelt in the same regions had added the keeping of swine to the pastoral occupations of their predecessors;¶ and the Druses of the Hauran, and other Arabs who now inhabit that country, depend chiefly for their subsistence on the flocks and herds which they keep. The people of the two and a half tribes, therefore, may well be compared with the fierce Druses of the Hauran, or with other semi-nomadic tribes of Western Asia, such as the Koords of Koordistan, or the Lesghies and Circassians of Daghestan, on the slopes of the Caucasus, for they are all fierce robbers, cunning, bold even to rashness, so that "one of the least of them can resist a hundred, and the greatest a thousand."** All these tribes are essentially nomadic.

The tent is not the only extemporized shelter spoken of in the Scriptures; booths are repeatedly referred to, and appear to have been as extensively used among the ancients as they are at present in Western Asia. They are constructed of stout branches of trees, firmly planted in the ground, united by other branches at the top, and thus supporting a roof of green

* Numb. xxxii., 33; Josh. xxii., 4.
† Josh. xxii., 4, 8.
‡ 1 Chron. v., 18.
§ 1 Chron. v., 9, 10.
‖ 1 Chron. v., 26.
¶ Matt. viii., 30.
** 1 Chron. xii., 8, 14.

boughs. Booths are of all sizes, the largest being built for the purpose of sheltering the herds and flocks from the scorching rays of the summer sun and the winter rains.* The watchmen in the vineyards,† and in the melon and cucumber patches,‡ dwell in booths during the fruit season. These are erected on the highest points, and support a shaded platform, which serves as a post of observation. The inhabitants of villages situated in deep valleys, finding their winter-quarters becoming hot and uncomfortable as spring advances, move a short distance up the mountain, and dwell, each family under its own booth. The guards posted upon the road to watch for the safety of travelers, the *cafejys* who offer refreshment to the passer-by, and many other classes we could mention, prefer the shade of the booth to the closer quarters of the neighboring house. The Arab is often driven by the extreme heat to strike his tent, and erect instead a booth of reeds by the river-side, where he temporarily adopts amphibious habits;§ and in military campaigns, which are almost invariably undertaken in the summer season, the officers, and even the troops engaged in the siege of a town, do not fail to change the tent, with its close heated atmosphere, for the breezy booth.‖

The Jews were commanded to erect booths or "tabernacles" in their cities at a particular time of the year, and to dwell under them for one entire week, in commemoration of their forty years' wanderings in the wilderness.¶ After their return from the captivity, it is particularly mentioned that, having neglected this custom since the days of Joshua, the son of Nun, the people with great zeal once more observed "the Feast of Tabernacles." They "went forth unto the mount, and fetched olive-branches, and pine-branches, and myrtle-branches, and palm-branches, and branches of thick trees, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the streets and squares."** The modern Jews of Western Asia, enduring like misfortunes with the returned captives from Babylon, generally observe this "week of thanksgiving" with a fidelity we vainly look for in the annals of their nation's highest prosperity.

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* Gen. xxxiii., 17. † Job xxvii., 18. ‡ Isa. i., 8. § Layard, vol. i., p. 116.

‖ 2 Sam. xi., 11; 1 Kings xx., 16, where the word translated "tents" and "pavilions" properly means booths.

¶ Lev. xxiii., 33–43. ** Neh. viii., 16.

There is no probability that the military tent of the Israelites was similar to those of the nomadic tribes, which are ill adapted to the formation of a camp. Indeed it is highly probable that, in their primitive simplicity, the Hebrews went to war without tents, and with little baggage of any kind. They, however, must subsequently have adopted the customs of neighboring nations, who often displayed the greatest magnificence in their camp life.* The modern military tent of the East is made of canvas, and painted green, the sacred color of the Mohammedans. It is circular, and supported by a single pole in two pieces. The tents of officers, and especially that of the general, are often large and of fine material, divided into several apartments, spread with carpets and rich divans. This is more particularly the case when the sovereign personally heads a military expedition or pleasure excursion.†

Tent-making constitutes an important occupation in Western Asia at the present day. In all the larger cities, and particularly at Constantinople, there is a portion of the bazar, or business part of the town, entirely devoted to this branch of industry. Here may be seen men engaged in cutting and sewing canvas, in constructing or finishing off tents of various forms and sizes, in mending and repairing those long used, or packing them up for their customers. This is what we have described as the military tent, for the black tent of the nomads is made exclusively by themselves. But the military tent is not employed solely for the purpose of warfare. The civilian often carries it with him on his journey, and pitches it at night; it is frequently seen beside some hot spring, whose sanitary waters are sought to mitigate the sufferings of the sick; and one of the most refreshing sights of the advancing spring is the herds of horses feeding on the green barley sown for the purpose in the neighborhood of every town, with the conical tents of their keepers scattered here and there over the valley or plain. The apostle Paul was a tent-maker,‡ and the tents he constructed were doubtless employed by the Roman soldiers; since no other military power existed in his day in the lands where he wrought. The Roman tent, like the Grecian, is probably identical with the tent still used in the same lands.

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* 2 Kings vii., 7, 8, 15, 16. † Jer. xliii., 10. ‡ Acts xviii., 3.

CHAPTER IV.

PERMANENT HABITATIONS—THE HOUSE AND THE TOWN.

It has been thought by many, both in ancient and in modern times, that the first habitations of men consisted of dens and caves, either natural or artificial. We have no intention to enter the field of prehistoric inquiry, much less to carry any inquiries beyond the geographical limits we have set for ourselves. Thus much, however, we must say: that the lands of the Bible contain numerous caves, mostly in the calcareous ranges which predominate, many of which, though owing their origin to natural causes, show more or less the traces of man's work. These have doubtless been occupied by human beings, sometimes permanently, but oftener on special occasions; and this is still the case at the present time. Caves were resorted to by the Israelites in times of public danger,* and they were even wrought by the hand of man for that very purpose.† In the Northern countries such places are apt to be damp and unhealthy, a fact which is attested by the presence of stalactites and stalagmites. There still exist extensive rock excavations, in the form of apartments, indicating not only advanced ideas of comfort, but, in some cases, refinement and artistic taste. The finest specimens of this nature are to be found in Lycia, on the south-western coast of Asia Minor, and in the city of Petra, in the land of Edom. It is easy, however, for the most superficial observer to perceive that an extremely small portion alone of the population that once occupied these sites lived in rock habitations. They chiefly constituted rock temples and tombs, of which we shall have occasion to speak in their proper place. Besides these, several other localities have long been noted for their rock excavations. The most northern is the deep and warm valley of Inkerman, near Sebastopol, in the Southern Crimea. So, also, the innumerable excava-

* 1 Sam. xxiii., 29.

† Judg. vi., 2.

tions in tufaceous limestone at Uch-Hissar, and in selenite at Seidiler, in Asia Minor, were doubtless, many of them, used as habitations at a remote period of antiquity. Here the rocks contain an entire town in chambers and habitations, respecting whose early history nothing positive is known, but many of which are still occupied at the present day. There is on the western frontier of Persia a town called Sherazool, not far from the field of Arbela, where Darius was conquered by Alexander, which is mostly dug out of the rock. This appears to have been done by the inhabitants to secure themselves against the constant incursions of predatory Arabs and Koords,* being situated upon the top of a hill, and accessible only by steps cut in the rock. It appears, however, to be a work of considerable antiquity.†

Many rock excavations were used during the ascetic age of Christianity by hermits or by fraternities of monks, and there are some yet occupied for that purpose. At the fountain of the Orontes in Cœle-Syria, and at Aïn-Jidy (Engedi) on the western coast of the Dead Sea, the monks only enlarged already existing strongholds.‡ There are many excavations in Upper Egypt, originally inhabited by a race of troglodytes, then used as depositories for mummies, and later still occupied by several thousands of anchorites, or hermits, while at the present day there dwells within those caves a tribe of aborigines who are supposed to be the descendants of the ancient inhabitants of Thebes.

Few of the caves of Western Asia are now occupied as permanent places of abode; they are mostly the resort of shepherds, who make them the stables of their flocks. It not unfrequently occurs, at the present day, that a people oppressed by war, or the tyranny of their rulers, forsake the towns and villages, and take up their abode for a time in these wild and solitary places, in the hope of escaping from their oppressors.§ Fugitives from the battle-field, leaders of armies, and even princes and royal personages, have repeatedly, in modern as in ancient times, concealed themselves from their pursuers within these dark recesses.‖ Bandits and outlaws have also made

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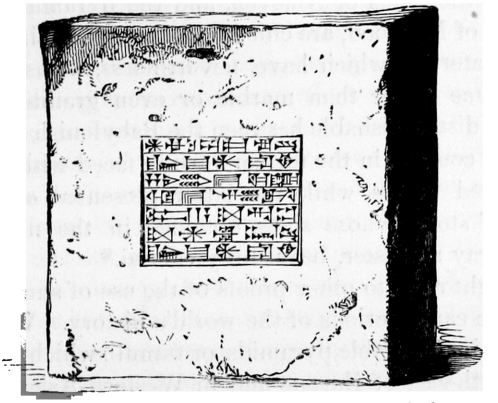
* Judg. vi., 2. † Tavernier, p. 73. ‡ 1 Sam. xxiii., 14, 25, 29.
§ 1 Sam. xiii., 6. ‖ Josh. x., 16; 1 Sam. xxiv., 3, 4.

these caverns their abode, whence they sallied forth to commit robbery and murder;* and in times of persecution on account of religion, men, women, and even children, have been forced to abandon their homes, and wait for better times in "dens and caves of the earth."† The deacon of the present Evangelical Armenian Church of Sivas, in Asia Minor, was compelled to leave his home in Divrik, for fear of death on account of his faith, and abode for several months in a cave in the mountains, where he was secretly furnished with provisions.

The earliest mention of human dwellings is contained by implication in Gen. iv., 17, where Cain is said to have "builded a city." Nothing, however, is stated in this passage respecting the form or materials of the houses of which it was composed. The passage quoted would seem to indicate not that dwellings did not exist before, but rather that Cain was the first to erect "a city," a fortified place of abode, wherein he could defend himself against any avenger of blood.‡ The first mention made of the materials of which dwellings were constructed is contained in the following account of the earliest migration of the descendants of Noah: "And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east" (*in* the land lying east of the country where Moses was when he wrote this account), "that they found a plain in the land of Shinar" (generally recognized as Babylonia, in Lower Mesopotamia); "and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to; let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime" (bitumen) "had they for mortar. And they said, Go to; let us build us a city and a tower."§ This narrative refers to the building of the Tower of Babel. There are at present the remains of three stupendous ruins, each of which is claimed by different travelers to occupy the site of that celebrated pyramid; either of these structures would answer our purpose by furnishing an illustration of the first building materials on record. One of these seems particularly likely to have been the Tower of Babel, and subsequently the Temple of Belus. "It is an oblong mass, composed chiefly of unbaked brick, rising from the plain to a height of one hundred and ten feet, and

* 1 Sam. xxii., 1, 2.
† 1 Kings xviii., 4; Heb. xi., 38.
‡ Gen. iv., 14.
§ Gen. xi., 2–4.

having at the top a broad flat space, with heaps of rubbish. The faces of the mound are about two hundred yards in length, and thus agree with Herodotus's estimate. Tunnels driven through the structure show that it was formerly covered with a wall of baked-brick masonry; many such bricks are found loose, and bear the name of Nebuchadnezzar."* These bricks



Babylonian baked Brick, with Nebuchadnezzar's Name; 12 inches square and 3 inches thick. (Dan. iv., 30.)

are a foot square; some of them contain long inscriptions, arranged in columns in the arrow-headed character, supposed to be the oldest kind of writing. Others are beautifully enameled, an art not wholly lost in these regions, for it is still practiced in Persia, whence it was introduced a few centuries ago into Turkey, and the manufacture established at Kutaya, in Asia Minor. Such bricks are now dug up among the very extensive ruins in the plain of Babylonia, and taken to Bagdad for building purposes; and the difficulty of identifying the site of the Babylon of Scripture has arisen from the fact that the materials of which it was built have, at various times, been removed for the construction of the great cities which have successively replaced it. It has, indeed, been the quarry that has furnished the materials for their erection. Nebuchadnezzar either repaired Babylon, as many suppose, or built it anew upon a neighboring site with the remains of the more ancient Babel;† for Babylon has several times been changed, and within

* Rawlinson, "Herodotus," vol. ii., p. 477.

† Dan. iv., 30.

a comparatively modern period Seleucia and Ctesiphon, and still later Bagdad, have taken its place.

The extensive excavations made among the ruins of Nineveh by Messrs. Layard and Botta further confirm the statement that the oldest building materials were sun-dried bricks, cemented with mortar, bitumen, or mere clay. The splendid palaces of the kings of Nineveh, and the pyramid which bears the name of Nimrood, are chiefly constructed of these apparently frail materials, which have, nevertheless, withstood the ravages of time better than marble or even granite. The only difference distinguishable between the Babylonish and Nineveh structures consists in the former's being faced with burned and even glazed bricks, while the latter presented everywhere a surface of stone, whose slabs, obtained in the neighborhood, were of gray alabaster, beautifully carved.*

We might refer to other proofs of the use of sun-dried bricks during the early periods of the world's history. We might describe the innumerable pyramids, or tumuli, which were erected in the south-east of Europe and in Western Asia as tombs of the dead, from the earliest time down to the age of Mithridates, just before the Christian era; and we might particularly mention the vast numbers of pyramids of clay in Upper Egypt, above Memphis.† All these facts agree with the Mosaic narrative, which represents the children of Israel during their Egyptian bondage as chiefly engaged in making brick;‡ and we may infer that these were not burned in the kiln, from the circumstance that straw was mixed with the clay in their manufacture, which is done only with sun-dried bricks. The statement, moreover, that the Israelites built the "treasure cities Pithom and Raamses,"§ implies that sun-dried bricks were the chief material employed in building not only houses and public structures, but even the fortifications and walls of cities. Hewn stone probably began to be employed at a later period than brick. When mankind removed to mountainous and rocky regions, where clay did not abound, as in Mesopotamia and Egypt, they used as building material for their public edifices irregularly broken stones, and then hewn blocks, the lat-

* Layard, vol. ii., p. 201.

† Josephus, "Antiquities," bk. ii., chap. ix., § 1; Bruce, vol. i., p. 54.

‡ Exod. v., 6–8. § Exod. i., 11.

ter of which alone have somewhat resisted the influence of time, and continue to tell the story of by-gone ages.*

Modern travelers in Western Asia have ever been struck with the fact that almost every house in the country is now made of crude or sun-dried bricks. One occasionally meets with a bridge, a khan, a church, or a mosk built of hewn stone, to which may be added some half-dilapidated structures, and crumbling walls and battlements of cities. Nearly every block of these has, in all probability, been brought to its present position from some more ancient ruin, which has now disappeared. The eye becomes used to the patchwork of old inscriptions turned upside down, and carved stones arranged at haphazard in the walls, columns of various materials and dimensions belonging to different orders of architecture, standing in a row, and forming the portico of a mosk, church, or bath. But all the rest of the dwellings are made of mud bricks; and this appears to have been the case as much anciently as now. It should, however, be remarked that where light, porous limestone abounds, it is cut into regular blocks with a coarse saw, and used in the same manner as bricks in the erection of buildings. This is particularly the case along the coast of Syria, on the island of Rhodes, and in the centre of Asia Minor, about Mount Argæus.

The manufacture of sun-dried bricks is a process as simple as that practiced by the ancient Egyptians, and is strikingly similar in its details to the pictorial representations carved upon their monuments.† A shallow pit is employed for mixing the mud or clay, into which is thrown a suitable amount of fine-cut straw. The manner in which the straw is cut up on the threshing-floor has been already described, and the mixing is done with the feet.‡ The mud is taken up with the hands or a wooden shovel and thrown into a hod, which is then car-

* Isa. ix., 9, 10. Herodotus speaks of the houses of Sardis as being made of "reeds and mud;" they were doubtless the common class of dwellings; and by "mud" is meant sun-dried mud bricks, and by "reeds" broken reeds from the Hermus and Gyges, in alternate layers, as at Babylon. The tomb of Hallyatis and the adjoining pyramids are all made of sun-burned bricks, as are all the houses of that region to-day. Those of Athens are said to have been built of wood, by which is probably meant that, as now, the frame-work is of wood and the filling up of mud bricks.

† Wilkinson, vol. ii., p. 196.

‡ Nahum iii., 14.

ried to the moulder. The latter has previously selected a spot of ground, smooth, bare, and well exposed to the sun, where his bricks will dry quickest. The mould is oblong in form, made of boards, and divided into compartments, each of which will mould a brick about eight inches long by four in width and three in thickness. One of these compartments is often double the size of the rest, turning out a larger brick. The mould is set down upon the ground, and the mud, of the consistency of thick paste, poured into it, and smoothed over with a mason's trowel or with the palm of the hand. The wooden frame is then carefully taken up and set down again empty beside the newly-moulded bricks, ready to receive and turn out a new complement of mud. The material employed is not clay, but simple moistened earth. The bricks are often cemented with the same material in place of mortar, and walls so built are easily worn away by the action of the rains. When, however, united with lime cement, and daubed on the outside with the same material, they are very enduring.

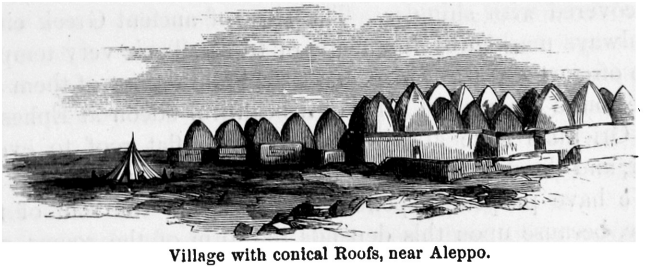
The ancients appear to have had the same experience as the moderns respecting the importance of a solid foundation on which to erect their buildings. In all Western Asia the rains, though comparatively infrequent, are copious and heavy while they last. The uneven and often abrupt surface of the country, presenting steep mountain heights and deep valleys, occasions during a storm the rapid gathering of waters to a single point, so that mighty torrents suddenly appear rushing along through gorges where not a drop of water trickled a moment before.* These pour down with irresistible force, often tearing away rocks and trees, and sweeping all before them. Houses erected near their track are in imminent danger of being carried away by the angry floods. Should there be any weakness in their foundation, the rushing waters soon work their way beneath, and, undermining the building, bear it away bodily.† No danger, however, arises from the frail nature of the materials of which the house itself is composed, for they have only to resist the influence of the descending rain. Our Saviour's simile contained in the passages cited above doubtless had reference to the "floods" just described; it will,

* Job xii., 15.

† Matt. vii., 24–27; Luke vi., 48, 49.

however, apply almost as well to the annual inundations of Mesopotamia, and especially to the land of Egypt, where the only way to preserve towns and villages and public buildings from destruction was, and is at the present day, to erect them upon elevations of great strength. It is well known that the temples and palaces of ancient Nineveh, as well as those of Upper Egypt, were all built upon such platforms or terraces.*

The arch appears to have been known to the ancients as early as seventeen hundred years before the Christian era, which is the period when the Israelites resided in Egypt.† Still it was very little used by them, and the dome may be called, comparatively, a modern invention. In forming an idea, therefore, of the appearance of ancient buildings in Palestine, while we allow the arch to remain spanning a few gate-ways, especially in large cities, we must strike out of the picture the many domes that constitute so important a feature in the Oriental landscape of to-day. Jerusalem is now a city of domes. The Saracens largely adopted this form of architecture in all their mosks, mausoleums, khans, and public baths; and the heirs of their power and religious faith have followed their example.



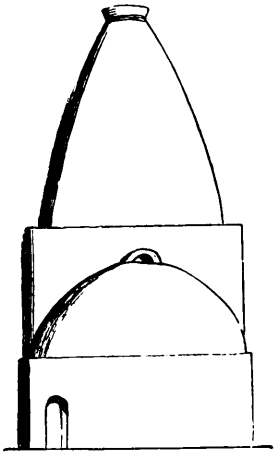
Village with conical Roofs, near Aleppo.

There is, however, a simple and rude form of dome, met with only in the rural districts, which seems to have been as much in use anciently as now, and in the same regions. It looks like a conical chimney, and is intended for the escape of the smoke from the fire-place, which stands in the middle of the room. It is built of mud, bricks, or branches, and is daubed with mud both within and without. There is an entire village built in this style in the neighborhood of Aleppo; but the structure is

* Layard, "Nineveh," vol. ii., p. 200.

† Ibid., vol. ii., p. 205.

mostly confined to Armenia. The reader can not fail to be interested in the accompanying sketches, which strikingly illustrate the preservation of old customs in Western Asia. The Assyrian sculpture also proves that the spherical dome was known to that people at least 750 B.C.



Ancient Assyrian House.

The tiled roof was not more common anciently than it is now. It is a curious and interesting fact that the tile of baked clay, so universally adopted in Southern Europe, has never met with general favor in Western Asia, any more than the baked brick which is discovered only among the ruins of Babylon, and is manufactured, at the present day, solely as a paving-stone for halls, rooms, etc. Tiles appear to have been introduced by the Greeks, and their use is still mostly confined to this people and to the sea-port towns in which they reside, for the wooden or log houses of Northern Asia Minor are covered with shingles. The sites of ancient Greek cities are always marked by fragments of tiles. Their very temples were often roofed with them, and marble imitations of them are to be found among the ruins of a beautiful odeon at Ephesus. But Orientals have always preferred the flat roof to every other, and the dome itself has not succeeded in supplanting it.

We have purposely spoken, first of all, of the roof of the house, because upon this depends the form of the rooms, and indeed the shape of the whole building. The dome, for instance, makes every room square, while the tiled roof brings all the parts composing the structure into one regular mass, over which such a roof can be erected. The Oriental roof, on the other hand, being flat, the form of the rooms beneath depends upon the means available for supporting its great weight. The roofs in some cases anciently consisted of long slabs of hewn stone, such as may yet be seen in the Hauran, the ancient Bashan.* Other instances on a larger scale exist in Upper

* Porter, "Giant Cities," p. 84.

Egypt, where the huge temples and palaces of the Pharaohs attest an age of despotism scarcely palliated by its original and lofty conceptions. The rare occurrence of such remains is a proof that the ancients almost universally resorted to the same means as the moderns to support the roofs of their houses. Trees, tall and straight, are selected, more especially the poplar, which is grown particularly for this purpose. The cypress, too, and the tall Italian or stone-pine are thus employed, just as the ancients used the cedar in Greece, Italy, and Northern Africa, in the temples of Ephesus and of ancient Nineveh. The size of the room, therefore, depends now, as in ancient times, upon the length of the timber which supports the roof. The latter, however, occasionally rests upon pillars. This explains the fact that all the ancient halls and temples of Nineveh are of an oblong shape, the widest of them being not more than thirty-five feet,* and many of them showing evidence that the roof fell by the burning of the timbers with which it was formed. The construction of a single room, therefore, may be described in a few words: four walls are raised of mud bricks, bound more firmly together, where timber is not scarce, by a frame-work of wood lying within them and out of sight. The corners are also defended with timber, being the parts most exposed and likely to suffer. The form is square or oblong, generally the latter. In constructing the roof, beams are laid across the width of the room, and these support smaller pieces of wood placed at right angles upon them as closely as possible. In Egypt and Arabia, the trunk of a single palm-tree, split in two, is laid across the length of the room, and the rest of the roof support, consisting of shorter sticks, extends from the central beam to the side walls. Above the wood are laid mats or a thick layer of furze or heather, the object being to prevent the earth and gravel from sifting through into the apartment below. Lastly, clay is laid upon the top, to the depth of about a foot, which is beaten hard, making a compact mass, and needs to be rolled with a stone roller whenever it rains, especially after a long season of drought has cracked the surface of the roof. This surface, however, is sometimes rendered more impervious to the rains by plastering with a kind of cement

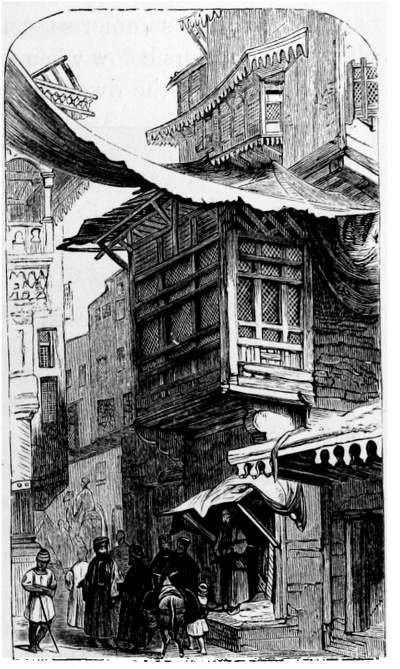
* Layard, "Nineveh," vol. ii., p. 204.

made of a composition of clay and oil, which hardens rapidly and thoroughly.

All who have paid any attention to the various forms assumed by architecture must have noticed that these do not depend simply upon the materials at hand, but also upon an idea which serves as a guide. Now it can not be denied that the ideal of Oriental architecture is the tent, which is represented by the room just described as a unit, or by two rooms contiguous to one another, and separated by a partition wall, with their entrance on the side, answering to the portion of the tent occupied by the men, and that which is reserved for the women. The great majority of the houses of a town thus consist of no more than one or two apartments, and we may add that the idea of a tent is carried even into details. The form of the room is oblong, and the floor is divided into a square with the addition of a parallelogram at the end next the door; the square area is raised a few inches above the other, and, when completely furnished, contains, like the tent, a divan on its three sides.

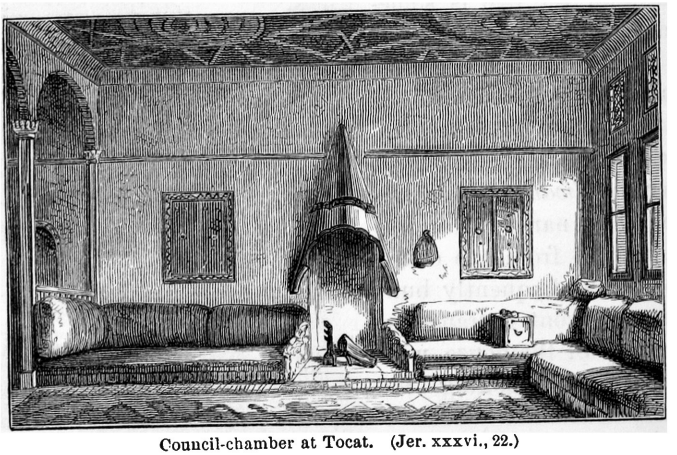
But when the means of the owner allow him to expand the dimensions of his dwelling, his ideal takes the form of a nomadic "dowar," to which allusion has already been made. A number of rooms are now built side by side, so as to inclose an oblong court, the roof being continuous. These consecutive rooms, representing as many tents pitched around a common space, are, however, occupied by a single household. Some of them are store-rooms, kitchens, and even stables; others continue to retain the form of the original, but, being occupied by subalterns, lose their peculiar furniture. The apartments of the head of the household, that of the *sit* (lady), and those of their children, are built and furnished essentially according to the model described above. But it should be borne in mind that there is an essential and radical difference between the Western and Eastern idea of architecture, as true now as anciently. The chief aim of the Occidental is to obtain beauty on the outside, and his success is to be judged by a general view from without; to this is to be sacrificed much of the comfort of those who live within; rooms have to be of inconvenient sizes and shapes, passages awry, and windows in the wrong places. The Oriental, on the other hand, cares little for the outward appearance; his houses are usually mere agglomera-

tions of rooms. Nothing is to be seen outside but a dead wall, with at most a high latticed window. But the show begins when you enter the court, which is regular, and set with verandas or windows. The most important spot is the room where alone male strangers are admitted, and called, *par excellence*, the *liwan*, or raised platform. It is situated directly opposite the door of entrance, with the court intervening, and is still more suggestive of a tent than the other apartments, being entirely open in front. Its furniture consists of a divan arranged upon three sides of a raised platform, while in front of the latter the eye is sometimes refreshed by a basin of water or a jetting fountain. There is often an additional story, consisting of one or more apartments built over the *liwan*, and accessible by a narrow staircase leading up from the court. Rooms are frequently built over the front entrance or gate-way of the house, with windows overlooking the street, which are places of particular resort when any sight is to be seen below. These rooms are often made to project for a distance of three or four feet beyond the lower story, and the windows admit the cool breeze as it blows through the narrow street, thus introducing it into the house. The divans are usually so arranged as to enable persons within to enjoy this refreshing draught as well as the street sights. In Egypt the upper rooms are exclusively occupied by the female members of the household; this is sometimes the case also elsewhere, and the windows are then screened with lattice-work made of narrow slats of wood, arranged diagonally at right angles with each other, and so close together



Projecting Fronts of Houses, Damascus.

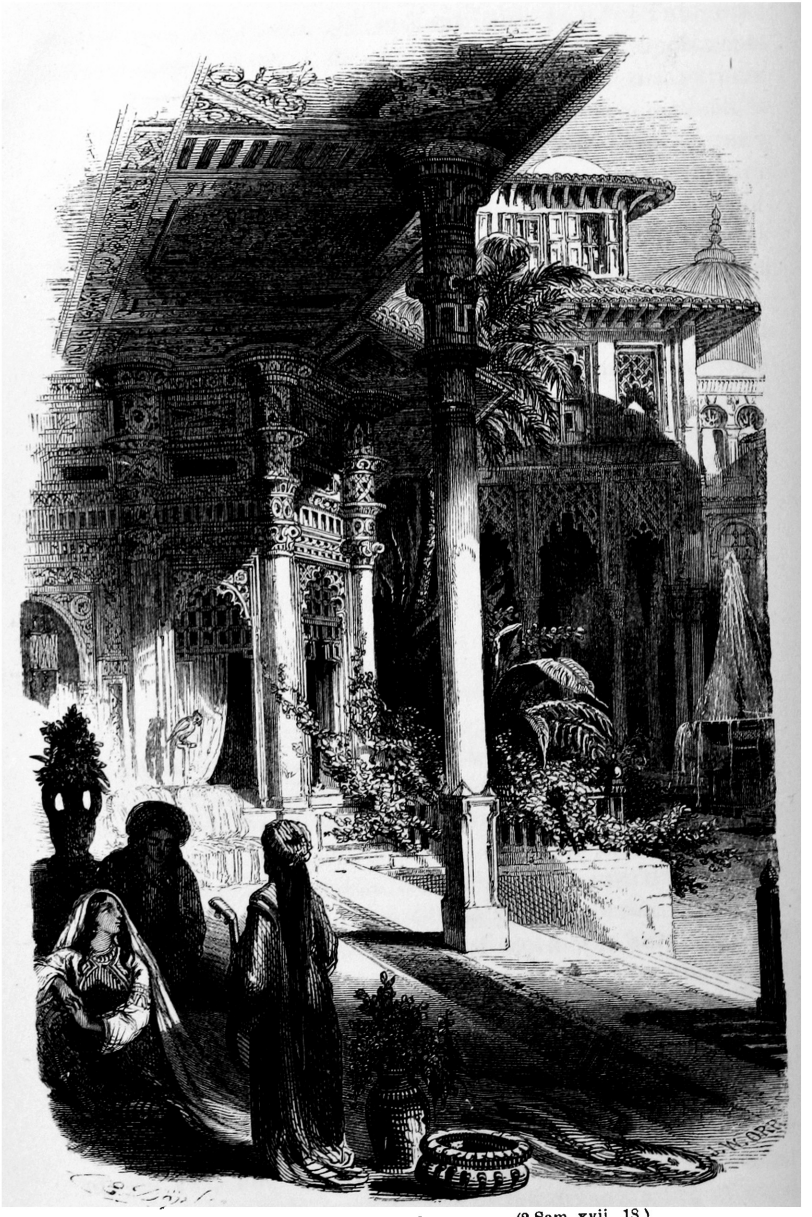
that persons within can see without being seen.* This same kind of screen is used for the windows of such apartments below as are occupied by women, as well as for the purpose of partitioning off a portion of the court and house which is appropriated to the women's use.† Sometimes the women's apartments are in a distinct building upon the court; or they are erected around a second court, accessible by a door, of which the master keeps the key. In Palestine and Western Asia generally the upper and more airy part of the house is resorted to in the summer season by the entire family, who resume their quarters below when the cool weather returns; hence the upper part of the dwelling is called the "summer house"



Council-chamber at Tocat. (Jer. xxxvi., 22.)

and the lower the "winter house." In an apartment of the latter, King Jehoiakim was sitting upon a divan beside the fire-place, on whose hearth a fire of wood was burning, when Jeremiah's roll was brought to him. After listening to the reading of three or four leaves, the king cut it up with the sheath-knife which he carried in his belt, and cast it into the fire.‡ The accompanying sketch will give some idea of the furniture of such apartments. It is the council-chamber of the Governor of Tocat, in Asia Minor, where that dignitary sits the day long and transacts all his official business. His usual place is at the right-hand corner of the divan; a fire of wood

* Judg. v., 28. † Cant. ii., 9. ‡ Jer. xxxvi., 22, 23.



Inner Court of a House in Damascus. (2 Sam. xvii., 18.)

is lighted on the hearth whenever the weather is cold, and the walls are hung with bags of cotton cloth filled with documents, each bearing the date of a separate year.

The court of an Eastern house has often a variegated pavement of stone, marble, or pebbles, tastefully designed. A tank or fountain occupies the centre, surrounded by a little garden filled with fragrant flowering shrubs, and shaded by orange, lemon, or citron trees. There is often a well in the court, or both a well and a fountain.* In some localities, what appears to be a well is the mouth of a cistern which lies beneath the court.† A pillared veranda sometimes runs along the front of the rooms on both sides of the court, upon which open all the windows of the lower apartments. These windows contain no glass, and are closed at night with solid single shutters of wood held fast on the inside with an iron hook. These shutters are mostly made of the large walnut-tree, which abounds in the country. The doors are usually of the same material, though oak, pine, or other wood is often employed, as it is also in other parts of the building. When a room, however, is much frequented during the day, as is the case with the business place of an official, or his principal reception-room, in winter a *perdeh*, or curtain, is hung before the door. It consists of a heavy rug or carpet, fastened by three hooks to the top of the door, with slats of wood sewed in across the width and at the bottom, which keep it stretched and in its place before the door. This is also placed at the doors of mosks and churches. When a person of consequence is about to enter, the *perdeh* is lifted and held up on both sides. There may be a reference to this custom in Psa. xxiv., 7. Such was the hanging of the tabernacle door.‡ The ancients sometimes had doors and even shutters of solid stone. These are now found, we believe, only in the stone cities of Bashan, the modern Hauran, where even the city gates are often of a single block of basalt nine or ten feet long,§ and in the inclosures of some gardens of Ooroomia, in Persia.‖ These doors have, instead of hinges, a projection above and below fitting so nicely into holes in the stone, and so highly polished, that they can be

* 2 Sam. xvii., 18. † Neh. ix., 25, margin. ‡ Exod. xxxix., 38.
§ Burkhardt, "Travels in Syria," p. 90. ‖ Perkins, p. 147.

opened and shut by a push with the finger. Locks are both of iron and of wood; the key of the latter consists of a piece of wood nine inches or a foot long, with pegs at one end near the extremity. It is not inserted in a key-hole, but there is an opening at the side of the door large enough to introduce the hand.* When the key is applied to the wooden bolt within, its pegs fit into corresponding holes, and, by displacing another set of pegs, enable one to draw the bolt aside, and thus unfasten the door.† The manner of carrying this key is to fasten it to a string or cord worn around the neck or attached to the girdle, when it is thrown over the shoulder, where it hangs all day.‡ When several persons need to use the same key, they agree to hide it under a stone or in some crevice in the wall near by.



A Man carrying his Keys. (Isa. xxii., 22.)

The gates of the rich and the doors of caravanseraÿs and other large buildings have a knocker made of a bent bar of iron, hung by a hinge, so as to strike upon a broad-headed nail. Otherwise there is always a ring set in the door, by which it is pulled to, and this is used as a knocker by striking it against the door with the open palm. Officers of justice rap on the doors with the ends of their staves of office, and some people, impatient of delay, try to make more noise by striking the door with a stone. The sleep of Orientals is proverbially heavy, and loud and repeated knockings at doors are sometimes heard at the dead of night, accompanied by the reiterated shouts of some belated traveler, re-echoed by the narrow streets, and arousing all the barking curs of the neighborhood; then a parley ensues, the gate opens to admit the stranger, and the street is again hushed and silent.§ Several Scripture passages allude to the ordinary mode of knocking.‖

The terraced roof of one house is often contiguous to those adjoining it, so that it is easy to pass from roof to roof, a means

* Cant. v., 4. † Lane, vol. i., p. 24. ‡ Isa. xxii., 22.
§ Cant. v., 2; Luke xii., 3; Acts xii., 13–16.
‖ Matt. vii., 7, 3, Luke xiii., 25; Rev. iii., 20.

of escape of which fugitives frequently avail themselves. Our Saviour, speaking to his disciples of the calamities which would come upon Jerusalem, warned them to leave the city on the first appearance of the Romans. "And let him that is on the house-top not go down" the staircase into the house, "neither enter therein to take any thing out:"* let him not go into the street already crowded with the peasantry seeking refuge within the city walls, but let him flee from terrace to terrace, and thus escape from the city before the enemy shall compass it round about, and the gates be shut against him. Thus at the great earthquake of Aleppo, in 1822, the few that escaped with their lives happened to be upon the house-tops, and, not going down into the houses or into the narrow streets, fled from roof to roof till they reached the fields outside the city.

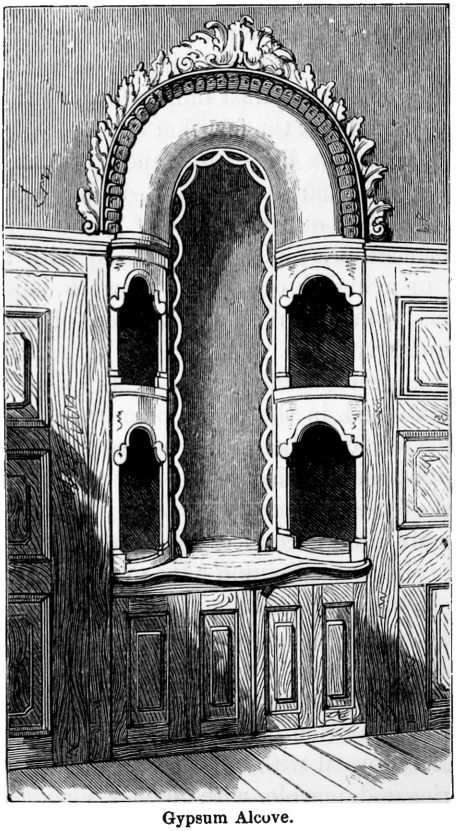
These flat roofs, or terraces, are sometimes inclosed with a low parapet of masonry or a higher one of lattice-work, supported by wooden frames, which screen the women of the household from the inquisitive gaze of the neighborhood.† Rarely do any windows appear on the outside of the dwelling, except as already mentioned, in the rooms over the gateway; for no window is allowed to be opened where it looks upon such parts of a neighbor's premises as are frequented by the women. The houses of the rich usually have a garden attached, which, among the Muslims, is connected with the harim, or women's apartments. Rooms adjoining this garden have windows opening upon it, and are favorite resorts of the inmates.

There is little in the streets of Eastern cities besides an occasional gate-way or door, to break the dull monotony of the continuous walls of stone or sun-dried brick. In houses of the wealthy the apartments are adorned with tessellated pavements and wainscotings of variegated marble, with niches, alcoves, pilasters, and other ornaments, elaborately carved in marble and alabaster. There are houses in Damascus where a single apartment thus ornamented has cost no less than ten thousand dollars. In parts of the country where gypsum abounds the

* Mark xiii., 15.

† It is an indication of the merciful character of the Mosaic laws that they specially enjoin the making of battlements for the roof, "that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence."—Deut. xxii., 8.

walls are plastered with it, and alcoves and ceilings are ornamented with beautiful designs, skillfully wrought with the hand and trowel, without either model or moulding. Even the floors are sometimes composed of the same material; but with the poorer classes, large baked bricks, square or hexagonal in shape, are used; and among the very poorest and in all villages the floors are of beaten clay or the bare earth.



Gypsum Alcove.

The chief ornament of a room, on which the chief expense is laid out, is the ceiling; hence in the Scriptures this class of dwellings are called "ceiled houses."* The favorite ceiling is made of wood, carved in intricate and graceful arabesque figures, painted in brilliant, gorgeous colors, and sometimes extremely beautiful. The ceiling of a kiosk in the old Palace of the Sultans, at Adrianople, built about four hundred years ago, is greatly admired, and has often been copied by European travelers.

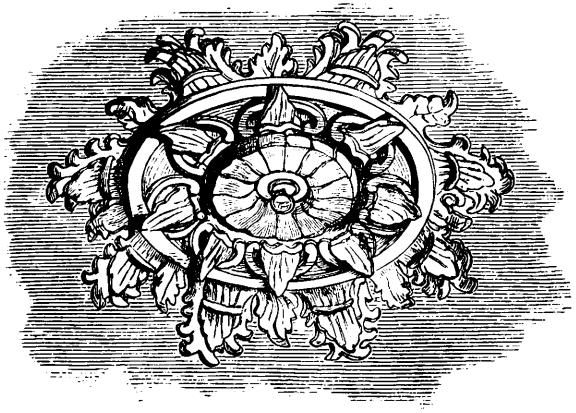
A favorite color for ceilings in Asia Minor, and one of the most enduring, is vermilion, also used by the ancients for this purpose.†

The walls of the rooms are usually plastered, and sometimes painted with representations of flowers and fruit, or pictures of the temple of Mecca, the Seraglio Point, or some rural kiosk,

* Haggai i., 4.

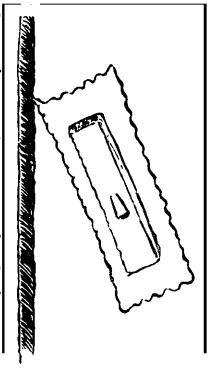
† Jer. xxii., 14.

or with an inscription in gilt letters, running around just below the ceiling. Sentences from the Koran are framed and hung upon the walls, instead of pictures.



Ceiling Ornament in Gypsum.

Among the Persians, despite the prohibition of the Koran, the finest rooms in the Shah's palaces are decorated with highly-colored frescoes of hunting and battle scenes, in which the Persians always come off victorious. Their religious creed has been unable to prevent their adoption of this custom of Nineveh, Babylon, and Persepolis. In the houses of the Jews passages from their law are hung on the wall;* and they often nail to their door-posts a small tin case containing a copy of the Decalogue, which they seem to regard as an effectual protection against the evil eye, and as a talisman. This is the form mostly used in the East. In Egypt most of the houses have some writing over the door; but in Western Asia the word *Mashallah*, or simply *Allah*, is inscribed upon several prominent portions of the outer wall or of the open court, and has the effect, it is supposed, of warding off the deleterious influence of the "evil eye." The Christians use, in their own languages, the words



The Law on the Door-post. (Deut. vi., 9.)

* Deut. vi., 9.

"A Gift to God," or others of a similar import, with the same end in view.

The greatest expense is usually lavished upon the reception-room, or *liwan;* nor is the gate-way opening upon the street less carefully decorated. Christians are allowed to have only insignificant gates, scarcely wide enough to admit a loaded mule. But the ruling race take great pride in their fine and lofty gates,* whose double doors stand open all day long, revealing the refreshing shade within of the peacock-tree and other varieties of the acacia, the citron, and the jasmine, together with many other odoriferous and flowering shrubs. On the carved benches, each side of the gate, lounge the gayly-clad retainers of the great man.† He himself often takes his seat here, and receives his guests or transacts business,‡ where the atmosphere is refreshed by the cooling breeze, and enlivened by the cheerful twitter of the swallows flitting in and out.

Every house has a back door, small, and usually in the harim, when the latter occupies the lower floor. Under Asiatic despotism and misrule, such a door is a ready means of escape from a mob, the police, creditors, robbers, or murderers. When there is a garden, this door leads into it; and there is another door in the garden wall opening upon a back lane or into the open fields, or a part of the wall is so arranged as to enable the family to escape over it. When the police are dragging a man by the hair, or otherwise taking him through the street, he usually tries to make a dash into an open door, and is often helped to escape over the flat roofs and through the back doors.§

Men of wealth, under the peculiar influence of Islam, occupy two houses of this kind, built side by side, one of which is appropriated to the use of the men, while the other, which is usually the finer of the two, is occupied by the women of the household. A door of communication connects the two, but the street entrance of the harim, or "house of the women,"‖ is kept closed, and the windows of the upper chambers opening upon the street are latticed. A lattice placed along the edge of the roof often screens the terrace of this part of the building.

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* Prov. xvii., 19. † Esth. ii., 19, 21. ‡ Prov. xiv., 19; Ezek. xxxiii., 30.
§ Jer. xxxix., 4. ‖ Esth. ii., 13.

Polygamy was not generally practiced by the Hebrews. Their social institutions resembled those of the Egyptians, who, according to Herodotus, understood "women's rights" better than any other nation of antiquity, and his testimony is fully confirmed by the home and social scenes pictured upon their monuments. Yet the Hebrew people fully felt the influence of the manners of the Chaldeans, from whom they had sprung, and who carried polygamy and the separation of the sexes to the utmost extreme.*

They did not, however, like the Chaldeans, usually divide their dwellings into apartments appropriated exclusively to men or women, as is done by their Mohammedan successors. There is, indeed, no doubt that polygamy in its worst form was practiced by the kings, though positively forbidden,† and by the chief men of the Jewish nation, and concubinage was very prevalent, being a natural consequence of the system of slavery.‡ But, with these exceptions, the people generally made an approach toward the condition of society now prevalent among Oriental Christians.

King Solomon built a house for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken to wife.§ Among the Persians, who inherited the vices of the Babylonians, the palace of King Ahasuerus comprised two distinct harims, one of which probably corresponded to the palace of the Seraskier's Court at Constantinople, in which, when a sultan dies, his wives and concubines are supported at the expense of his successor.‖

We must now pass in review some Scripture passages which are explained by our description of Oriental houses.

In the account of the terrible end of Jezebel, the infamous widow of King Ahab, there are several particulars which deserve attention. Naboth, with his sons, had been stoned to death at Samaria, that the king might take possession of his vineyard, which adjoined his palace in that city. But divine vengeance did not long delay to overtake this wicked race. Ahab's blood was licked by the very dogs that licked the blood of Naboth and his sons, at the Pool of Samaria.¶

The latter possessed also "a field," or "flat of ground," out-

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* 1 Sam. i., 1, 2. † Deut. xvii., 17. ‡ 2 Sam. v., 13; 1 Kings xi., 13.
§ 1 Kings vii., 8. ‖ Esth. ii., 14. ¶ 1 Kings xxii., 37, 38.

side of Jezreel, his native town, and here occurred another tragedy in the death of Jehoram, son and successor of the wicked Ahab.

The king's chief palace was in Samaria, the capital, but he had in Jezreel a fine residence built by Ahab, his father, as an agreeable retreat from the cares of state, which was highly esteemed on account of the salubrity of the place. There the proud Jezebel permanently resided, and hither had her son Jehoram repaired "to be healed of his wounds," where he was joined by his nephew, Ahaziah, the companion of his defeat at Ramoth-gilead.* Jezreel and its "tower" were, moreover, an advanced post of observation, whence the allied kings could best watch any further movements of the victorious Syrians; and their anxiety upon this subject is fully illustrated by the effect produced upon their minds when the rapid approach of Jehu was announced by the sentinel.† The king's palace at Jezreel, now wholly occupied by the queen-mother, appears to have been erected, not against the city wall, as some have supposed—a position of which we have no example either in ancient or modern times, and which does not fulfill the conditions of this tragical narrative—but just within the city gate, upon an open square, or "void place," similar to that which existed at Samaria.‡ The windows of the upper story were probably a habitual resort of the queen, who, as is customary with Oriental rulers of the present day, sat here upon the divan to divert herself with the sights of this public thoroughfare. Women of her age and station are not very scrupulous in the use of the veil, and dispense with the lattice. She was, however, attended still by her eunuchs, those pliant tools of Oriental despotism.§

The progress of Jehu toward Jezreel had been watched from the tower, which commanded a view of the valley road leading eastward for a distance of six miles,‖ and, his approach exciting anxiety, the two kings went forth to meet him. Providence brought it about that Jehoram should be slain upon the

* 2 Kings viii., 28, 29.

† We adopt in this narrative the version of the Septuagint.

‡ 1 Kings xxii., 10; Stanley, "Jewish Church," vol. ii., lect. xxx., p. 349.

§ 2 Kings ix., 30, 31.

‖ "The Land and the Book," vol. ii., p. 183.

highway which passed by Naboth's field, and that his dead body should be cast upon that soil, where it was devoured by the fowls of the air.* Ahaziah, king of Judah, nephew of Jehoram, and grandson of the wicked Jezebel, had been visiting his uncle, and had accompanied him to meet Jehu. He now fled in his chariot, not back to Jezreel, but southward to his own country. He went by the road which led through (among) the vineyards, past the garden-house, built perhaps by Ahab upon a portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite. But he was overtaken and slain.†

These events had somewhat detained Jehu, and meantime the attendants of the discomfited king had fled to the city, and spread terror among the adherents of royalty. The high-spirited Jezebel seems to have entertained no doubt that she could frown the rebel into a return to his allegiance. She arrayed herself scrupulously in all the insignia of royalty, painted her eyebrows, and, accompanied by her chief eunuchs, hastened to take her place in the projecting upper window where she and her son had been accustomed to lounge upon the divan, and divert themselves with the ever-shifting scenes of the open square which lay between the palace and the city gate. There she stood, unscreened by any lattice, as Jehu passed under the arch of the gate and drove toward the palace. The threatening words uttered by the haughty queen did not frighten the bold captain. He ordered her eunuchs to throw her out of the projecting window, trod her under his horses' feet and chariot-wheels, drove on into the palace, and there feasted upon her dainties.

In the general consternation the dead queen was forgotten, and the street dogs devoured her body by the wall of Jezreel, or, as Jehu renders the prophecy, "in the portion of Jezreel" —an expression which here has the force of "within the limits of Jezreel."

We have explained that the sun-dried brick is the material of which the moderns, like the ancients before them, erect their dwellings. When thieves desire to introduce themselves into a house, they find the doors and windows barred within, and the material of which they are made too hard to be cut through

* 1 Kings xxi., 24. † 2 Kings ix., 27.

with their simple tools. But a sword, a knife, or even a stick can be worked into the wall so as to make a hole, which is speedily enlarged with the hands, and enables the thief or robber to introduce himself into the house with little noise. This mode of gaining access to a dwelling is practiced by thieves all over Western Asia wherever the walls are not built of stone, and our Saviour's reference to it* could not fail to be readily understood.

We have referred to the plastering of the house with lime mortar both within and without, as was done by the ancients.† When the mortar is not well tempered, its adhesive power is soon impaired, and the rain causes it to swell out, when the detached mortar cleaves off and falls to the ground, thus exposing the wall to destruction by the action of the elements.‡

Our description of the flat roofs of the houses will also serve to explain several passages of Scripture. During the summer the inhabitants of Palestine, Egypt, and Lower Mesopotamia habitually sleep upon the house-tops. These are chiefly occupied in the cities by the families, while the servants mostly lay down their bedding in the court below. The poor sleep in the streets, the open squares, and the courts of the mosks, rolling themselves in a coverlet, and careful to screen their faces from the baneful influence of the moon's rays. In Persia the punishment of death is visited upon the man who ventures to gaze from his terrace upon any part of his neighbor's premises where the women are exposed to view.§ It was thus that King David was led into sin;‖ nor is there such an apology for him as might be claimed for the Sultan of Turkey, who has the right to require every woman to unveil herself in his presence.

The flat roof is very convenient for such operations as require the heat of the sun. Here the washed wheat is spread to dry, as well as flax and various vegetables and fruits, to be stored as winter provisions. Wool and cotton, when washed, are spread out upon the roof, and here the clothes are hung. Rahab hid the spies sent by Joshua with the stalks of flax which she had "laid in order upon the roof to dry."¶

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* Ezek. viii., 7, 8; Matt. vi., 19, 20. Where thieves "break through" is, literally, *dig* through in the Greek.

† Lev. xiv., 42. ‡ Ezek. xiii., 10–15. § Perkins, p. 155.

‖ 2 Sam. xi., 2. ¶ Josh. ii., 6.

When any thing of public interest is occurring in the streets, the poorer houses having no upper story with windows, the men and boys rush out and line the thoroughfares, while the veiled women and girls are seen ranged along the edges of the terraced roofs, or leaning over parapets. When successive shots are heard in the town, announcing an accidental conflagration, or the breaking in of a cruel foe whose progress is marked by fire and sword, men, women, and children hasten to the house-tops, and gaze in anxious groups as long as the danger lasts.* So, also, the house-top is resorted to as a place of prayer, for it is usually the most isolated and quiet spot in the house.† There the rug is spread by the devout of every sect who seek comfort and consolation, rather than a display of their own piety.‡ On the occurrence of a death in the dwelling, mourners, especially priests, are stationed upon the house-tops, and attract public attention by their lamentations.§ And a proclamation is often made, as well as an address to the people, from the flat roof of a government-house which looks down upon the meidan, or public square.‖ Even the call to prayer is proclaimed from the house-top, where there is no minaret or church-bell.

It is erroneously supposed by many that when the bearers of the "sick of the palsy" sought to lay him at Jesus's feet, they bored a hole through the flat roof of the house. Such a work would have been no easy task, and all within would have run away to escape injury. There is a simpler and more probable explanation: Luke distinctly says that "they let him down through the tiling," *διὰ τῶν κεράμων*, literally, through the tiles.¶ The roofs are not covered with tiles; but there is often a veranda running round the court, and this is shaded by boards, which would, according to the Greek and the Roman fashion then prevailing, be covered with tiles. The court was evidently full of people, and Jesus spoke seated on the veranda, which was higher. The men quietly took off the tiles overhead, as is frequently done in order to re-arrange them, and let down the man along the edge of the veranda without even removing a board.

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* Isa. xxii., 1. † Prov. xxi., 9. ‡ Acts x., 9.
§ Isa. xv., 3; Jer. xlviii., 38. ‖ Matt. x., 27; Luke xii., 3. ¶ Luke v., 19.

The staircase of stone or wood, which leads to the flat roof, is usually upon the outside of the house, and starts from the central court. Tame pigeons or doves are fond of building their nests in the "secret places" underneath these stairs.* The room which the Shunamite woman induced her husband to build on the wall for the "holy man of God," Elisha,† was doubtless erected over the *liwan* of the house, as is done at the present day, and was accessible by an outer staircase leading up from the central court. Similar was the "loft where abode" the prophet Elijah with the widow of Zarephath; and we can see the correctness of the expression, "Elijah took the child and brought him down out of the chamber into the house."‡ Such, likewise, was the "upper chamber" in Joppa, in which they laid the body of Dorcas.§ Sometimes these upper chambers are large and well furnished, and, on account of their airiness, are reserved for festive occasions. This is particularly common in Egypt, at Cairo, where it is called "kaah," and is the largest and finest room in the house, often containing two divans, and being provided with a latticed recess, which is occupied by a female singer on occasion of an entertainment.‖ Such was the "upper room" in which our Lord partook of the Last Supper with his disciples.¶ In a similar apartment were assembled about a hundred and twenty disciples** on the day of Pentecost, when the new-born Church of Christ was baptized with the Holy Ghost.†† We can easily picture to ourselves the scene presented on that day when, the news of the miracle of tongues having spread through Jerusalem, devout men from all the nations among which the Jews were scattered were gathered in the central court of the house. As there were three thousand converts, at least twice that number must have heard the Word preached that day; and they doubtless not only filled the court, but also covered all the surrounding adjacent terraces, and stood in all the windows and doors, while Peter and the disciples, occupying a prominent position upon the terrace, or in an upper window, preached Christ's resurrection.

The picture we have drawn of an Oriental house will also

* Cant. ii., 14. † 2 Kings iv., 9, 10. ‡ 1 Kings xvii., 19–23.
§ Acts ix., 37–39. ‖ Lane, "Modern Egyptians," vol. i., p. 20.
¶ Mark xiv., 14, 15. ** Acts i., 13, 15. †† Acts ii., 1–4.

enable us to form a more definite idea of the scene of Peter's denial of his Master, portrayed by the pen of an eye-witness.* The place was the palace of the high-priest, not his official residence or place of business, but his private dwelling, as is proved by the presence of maid-servants;† the gate was not left wide open as in the day-time, but was ajar, and under the watchful care of the servants, both men and women. Peter, after lingering outside the door a while, slipped in, being introduced by his fellow-disciple. The crowd had advanced toward the *liwan*, where the high-priest occupied the seat of honor in the corner of the divan, while the members of the council sat around. Jesus stood upon a lower platform, in the place of the accused, in full sight both of the council and of all the outer court, to whom his back was turned. Peter, impelled by his anxious curiosity, and yet restrained by fear, joined a group of servants who stood or sat upon little stools around a brazier filled with burning charcoal. Here he could catch, by snatches, the questions of the high-priest and the replies of Jesus; here he repeatedly denied his Master, moved each time by his fright at the questions put to him to change his position between the group of servants and the gate; and here he was when the cock crew, and his Master, unmindful of his own peril, turned completely round and cast a glance of pity and rebuke upon his erring disciple. Peter then withdrew, slipping out at the gate, and wept bitterly in the dark and solitary street.‡

The "summer parlor" which Eglon, king of Moab, had "for himself alone,"§ corresponds in every respect to what the Turks call a *keushk* (kiosk). It consists of a small room built by itself on the roof of the house, having many windows to catch the breeze. Kiosks are now rarely seen in Palestine or Syria, but are common farther north and in the islands.‖ Where there is a large garden, such a room is sometimes built apart from the house, perhaps by a stream or basin of water, and shaded by trees. These are both favorite resorts on a hot summer's day;¶ but it is the rich alone who can afford to

* John xviii., 18, 25–27. † John xviii., 16, 17. ‡ Luke xxii., 56-62.
§ Judg. iii., 20. ‖ Stanley, "Jewish Church," vol. i., p. 349.
¶ The expression "to cover the feet" derives its aptness from the form of Oriental garments and the position they take. See Judg. iii., 24; Sam. xxiv., 3.

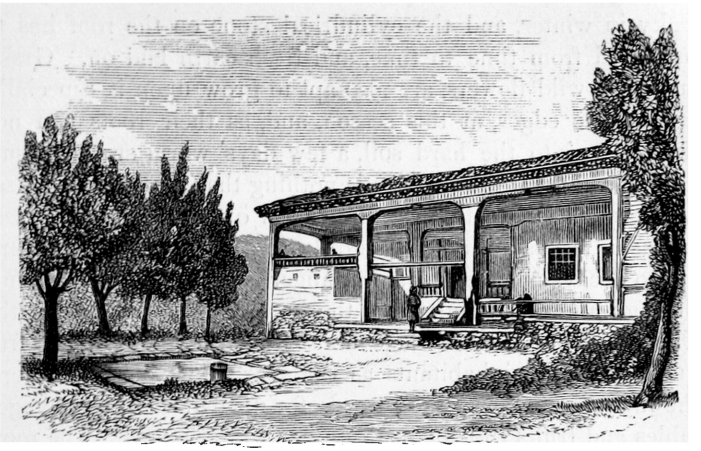
have such retreats, and not many even of these are willing to run the risk of being thought so wealthy as to possess such a luxury. Many elegant and costly buildings in the suburbs of Constantinople are called the sultan's kiosks, because he uses them in no other way. The finest of these are located at the "sweet waters" of Europe, and those of Asia. There is a kiosk similar to that of King Eglon standing a few rods from the palace of Cheragan, on the edge of the Bosphorus, which was a favorite resort of the late sultan. Near this spot stood, a few years ago, another kiosk, built on the precise model of one belonging to the Shah of Persia, in Teheran, being ornamented within and without with enameled tiles, similar to those still found among the ruins of Babylon, and described by Herodotus as adorning the interior and exterior of the buildings of that city.

It has already been remarked that farms are not scattered about the country as in lands blessed with a firm and stable government. The inhabitants everywhere cluster together for their mutual protection, and their houses form groups called towns, villages, or cities, according to their size. As cities, however, are usually built upon sites favorable to agriculture, they are generally surrounded with well-hedged or walled gardens, vineyards, and orchards, whose owners occupy slightly built "cottages," or "summer-houses," within their precincts during the hot season. Where timber is dear, they are built of mud or stone, like the city houses; but there are districts where the rich have summer residences built mostly of wood, usually the pitch-pine of the country, as the cedar was used in Solomon's day.* As a specimen of this kind of structure, we offer the reader the sketch of the country house of the mufti of Tocat. In front is a platform commanding a splendid view, and having a tank of running water.

There is generally a great difference in the appearance of the city and village houses, for the inhabitants of the latter are constantly liable to be plundered, both by the government officials and by marauders and lawless characters.† Their dwellings are rude by reason of real or feigned poverty, being

* 2 Sam. vii., 2, 7.

† Esth. ix., 19.



A Summer-house of Wood at Tocat. (Amos iii., 15.)

built of rough stones cemented with mud, or of sun-dried bricks. The site preferred is the sloping side of a hill, into which are dug the foundations of the dwelling, so that one end of its flat roof is on a level with the ground. As the houses are often built one above another, it frequently happens that the flat roof of one constitutes a platform in front of the next above. These simple dwellings consist of a single apartment, separated by a railing from an inner stable occupied by cattle. Light is admitted through an opening in the roof, which lies directly over the fire-place; the latter consists of a slight depression in the ground in the middle of the apartment, filled with ashes, where wood or charcoal is burned in the mountainous districts, replaced by the dried manure of cattle or camels in the lower countries. Many of these dwellings, however, have no opening in the roof, and the smoke has to find its way out as it can. In some portions of Western Asia each village house has its chimney wide enough to give light to the apartment; here wood is burned, the sticks not being laid horizontally, but set upright against the back of the fire-place. There is no window, but sometimes a narrow opening is made in the wall, which is blocked up in cold weather, and the very chimney is covered at night with a stone slab, in defiance of the principles of ventilation. The stable is the most extensive part of the establishment, and the roof of a village house covers a considerable area. It is very

leaky in winter, and the cylindrical stone on the roof has to be rolled from time to time, and fresh earth laid on. Grass, and even wild flowers, are also apt to grow upon it, especially around the edges, at this season, and, as their roots can not sink deep into the hard soil, a few days' warm sunshine suffices to dry them up. There is nothing that the village housewife prefers for starting the fire in her oven to this dry grass, so easily accessible and so slightly rooted.* These roots are apt to decay, and the unwary stranger is in danger of breaking through and of landing upon the horns of the cattle beneath. The flat roofs of the village houses are almost as much frequented by the inhabitants as the apartments below. There the industrious housewife spreads, for drying, the various vegetables and fruits which constitute her winter stores. The roof is sometimes entirely covered with the cakes of manure drying in the sun for fuel, as it is often their only resource. Villages that are situated, as is common, upon the top or the slope of a hill catch the summer breezes, and escape the malaria which infects the plains and lowlands. They command an extensive view, and some people are always upon the roofs, apparently enjoying in quiet the prospect or the breeze, but in reality casting their eyes over the valley and the hills, watching the flocks and the herds feeding in the plain, and ready to catch the distant sight of a marauding Arab or of the still more dreaded tax-gatherer and government official. The frail materials of which the houses are built would lead one to suppose that, when abandoned, the storms of a winter or two would obliterate them. When, however, a house is built of stone, especially of hewn stone, these materials are usually carried off, and thus have the traces of many ancient cities disappeared; but no one is tempted to steal the mud-bricks of a village dwelling. The roof decays and disappears, the long rank grass grows on the floor of the stable, which becomes a hiding-place for wild animals or serpents; but the four walls, though washed by many a winter's storm, long stand, in gradually diminished height, to tell of by-gone rural life.

Fortifications seem to have been erected in ancient times around every town of considerable size; indeed, walls consti-

* Psa. cxxix., 6; Isa. xxxvii., 27.

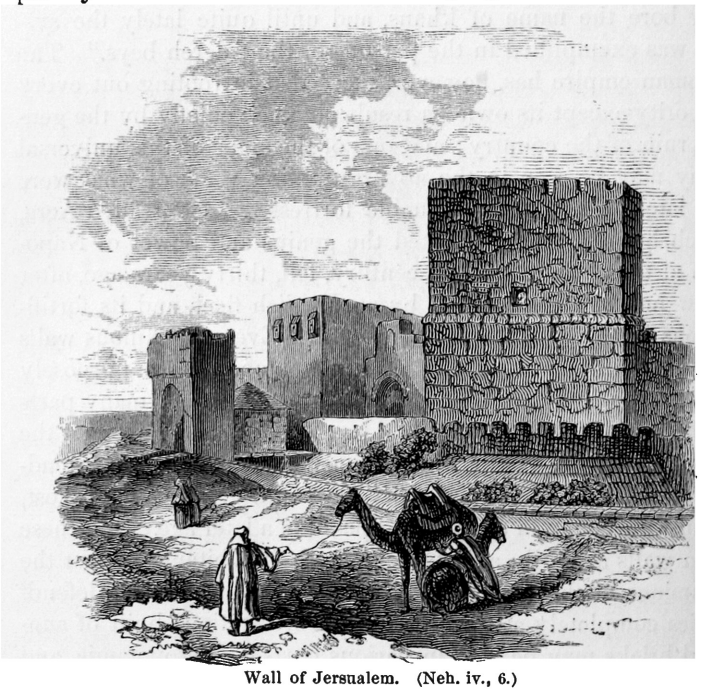
tuted the distinction between city and country.* The great empires of Assyria and Egypt possessed many a fortified town, which served to defend them against an invader, and to fasten the yoke upon the people. But in mountainous countries history, both sacred and profane, informs us that most cities of any size and strength possessed an independent king or ruler of their own.

These petty independent sovereignties have also had their representatives in Western Asia during the Middle Ages, when they bore the name of khans, and until quite lately the system was exemplified in the persons of the "dereh beys." The Ottoman empire has, however, succeeded in rooting out every authority except its own—a result obtained chiefly by the general ruin of the country; and one of the signs of this universal decay may be seen in the now crumbling walls of what were but lately deemed impregnable fortresses. St. Jean d'Acre, which had effectually resisted the genius and power of Napoleon at the close of the last century, fell, thirty years ago, after a few hours' bombardment by an English fleet, and its fortifications have not since been repaired. Even the famous walls of Constantinople are mostly fallen, and some of them purposely removed to make way for city improvements. In many parts of the country, indeed, it would be a useless expenditure of the public money to repair fortifications which were only intended to protect a garrison against bows and arrows, or, at most, against the common musket and pistol of a later age. Still these plain walls are fully able to defend the inhabitants against the incursions of the Bedawy Arabs, and a town not thus defended lies completely at their mercy. Fortifications built of sun-dried bricks may be seen in various parts of Mesopotamia, and even in Asia Minor;† but the walls of cities are usually of stone, the hewn blocks of which may safely be put down as wrought many centuries ago. Many walls have quite a history transcribed upon their surface. Those of Smyrna, for instance, tell a tale which has long passed away from the page of history. Several towers, shaped somewhat like the prows of ships, with intervening walls and battlements, are built of large blocks of porphyry, and date back to Lysimachus, one of Alex-

* Lev. xxv., 29–31; 1 Sam. vi., 18.

† Ussher, p. 197.

ander's generals, the original foundations of which may be traced around the entire fortifications. Other portions of the wall indicate a later Greek origin, while several towers are attributable to the Roman period. We can also trace the work of Byzantines, point out the Gothic arch of the Middle Ages, and clearly identify the workmanship of the Saracen and the Turk. Many of these ruins have been leveled by the hand of time, but the marks of hard-fought struggles are also plainly visible. Near one tower the progress of the battering-

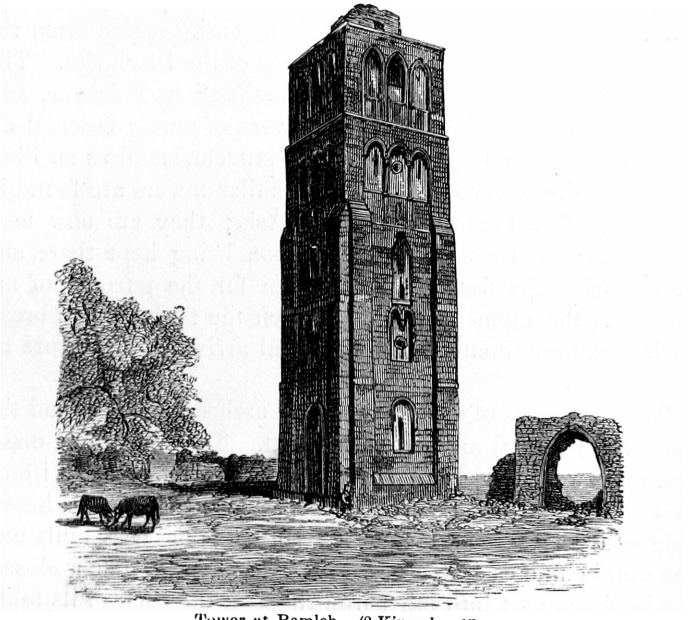


Wall of Jersualem. (Neh. iv., 6.)

ram was evidently arrested by the erection of an inner wall, and yonder a solid tower of stone presented an insurmountable obstacle after the besiegers had pierced almost through the entire wall. You can see how several towers and the curtain of the out-works were leveled with the ground, and there is the wide and gaping breach through which the enemy finally entered the citadel.

The walls of Jerusalem are about forty feet high, and stone steps lead to the top, where there is room for the soldiers to

stand behind the turreted parapet and fire upon the enemy; the towers are a little higher. There is usually one tower more lofty than the rest, and occupying a more commanding position, which serves, as anciently, for a sentinel's post, especially in time of war. Some of these towers were celebrated for their height, solidity, and beauty. The tower of Jezreel commanded an extensive view over the plain, stretching eastward to the Jordan. Josephus minutely describes the tower of Psephinus, occupying the north-west corner of the fortifications



Tower at Ramleh. (2 Kings ix., 17.)

of Jerusalem. It was one hundred and five feet in height, and afforded from its summit a prospect of Arabia at sunrising, as well as of the utmost limits of the Hebrew possessions to the sea westward.* Thevenot (page 123) describes the ancient towers of Alexandria, as he saw them, in 1652, before their demolition; they were built by the Ptolemies, and contained large marble halls, supported by pillars of red granite; each tower was provided with cisterns, and was large enough to con-

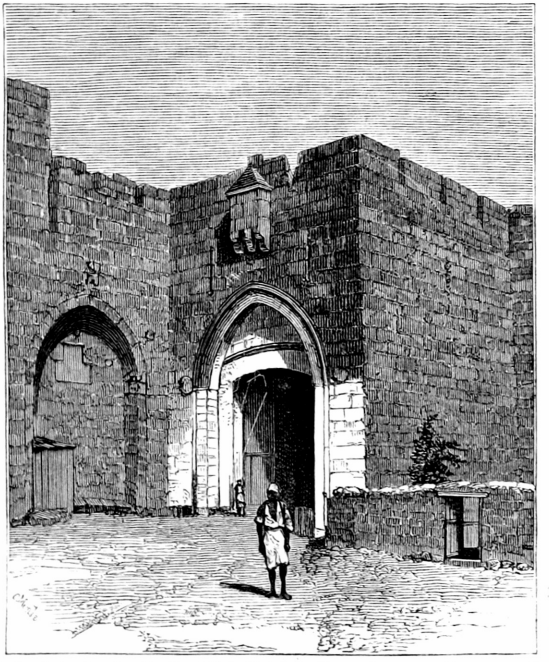
* "Jewish War," bk. v., ch. iii.

tain a garrison of two hundred men. Every traveler notices the high tower of Beirut, as well as the lofty square minarets of Damascus, from whose summit is sung in chorus the Muslim call to prayer. Similar to these, but loftier still, are the Teraskier's and Galata towers of Constantinople. There is another tower standing within the inclosure of the old seraglio, or Palace of the Sultans, which contains beautiful chambers, and a large apartment at the summit surrounded with windows, and covered with a pointed roof. It is an excellent point of observation, commanding as it does not only a great part of the city, but all the approaches by sea, and the entire region from the mountains of Bithynia to the entrance of the Black Sea. The town of Ramleh, the ancient Arimathea,* in Palestine, still contains a fine specimen of these towers, of purely Oriental architecture, which may, to the Bible student, stand as an illustration of the tower of Jezreel.† Similar towers are found in many fortified towns of Western Asia; they are now used mostly as signal towers, an old cannon being kept there, and fired during the festival of Ramadan for the purpose of announcing the moment of sunset, when the faithful may break their fast, or intimating the occasional arrival or departure of some pasha.

The gate-ways of cities are usually arched overhead, and the gates are guarded and closed at night. They are large, massive, and two-leaved,‡ built of heavy timber plated with iron.§ A strong iron bar, hooked at one end, hangs from a heavy ring of the same metal, made fast in a strong post built into the wall behind each fold of the gate. When the gate is closed, the hooks are set into other iron rings on the back of its folds, enabling the gate to resist a very heavy pressure from without. The lock is massive, and of wrought iron, and the long-handled, ponderous key is carried by the keeper of the gate in his belt, or hung from a nail in his little room close by. It required the strength of a Samson to tear off the gates of Gaza from their hinges with the two posts, "bar and all," and carry them up to "the top of a hill that is before Hebron."‖ There is always a tower, sometimes two, flanking the gate, and bench-

* Matt. xxvii., 57. † 2 Kings ix., 17. ‡ Isa. xlv., 1.
§ Acts xii., 10. ‖ Judg. xvi., 3.

es are fixed on each side of the entrance, often occupied by guards, who live in rooms opening upon the porch. This porch is the favorite resort of the citizens, especially of the wealthier class, who are attracted thither by the cool breeze blowing through the shaded gate-way, and diverted by the constant passing to and fro of man and beast. There is always a *café* near by. Here they sip their coffee, smoke their nargilehs, and discuss the events of the day. Here the officer of



The Jaffa Gate (anciently the Fish Gate) at Jerusalem. (2 Chron. xxxiii., 14.)

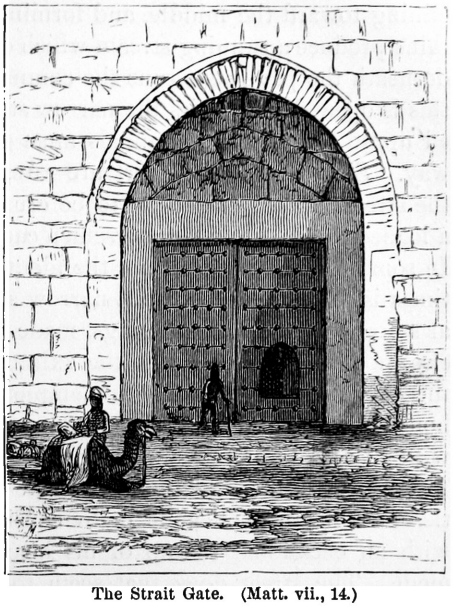
customs also takes his stand, and thrusts his sharp iron spike into sacks of grain, or other merchandise with which the camels are laden, in search of contraband goods. The judges and even the governor often transfer to this spot their most important business, and civil and criminal cases are often tried here, and decided. In patriarchal times, when the art of writing was little known, and no title-deeds secured to a man the possession of his real estate, important transactions, such as purchases of land or the decision of claims, took place at the city gate, at an hour of

the day when many influential citizens were there assembled, and thus became witnesses of the transaction.* City gates are closed at sunset, or soon after. Some of them contain, in one of their folds, a small door, which is left open for an hour or more after sunset, to accommodate foot-passengers accidentally delayed outside the walls or in the town; and it can be opened even later with a bakshish. But animals have to remain outside, and belated travelers are thus frequently forced to camp without the walls when they fail to reach the gate before sunset. The little door we have just described is still more common in the gates of the bazars. It is thought by some that an allusion is made to these small doors in the words, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."† It is stated in confirmation that the little door already described is called "the eye of a needle" by the Arabs of the present day. We have not met with the expression, but it seems not improbable that it has sometimes been used to denote the smallness of the opening. Nor have we ever heard, as some have asserted, that camels are sometimes made to pass through this little door upon their knees after their load and pack-saddle have been taken off, which is deemed emblematic of the humility and freedom from worldly cares requisite to enable us to enter in at the "strait gate." The fact is, a camel could never pass through such a door, for, besides being small and low, its threshold, which consists of the lower part of the great gate, is a foot and a half or two feet in height. We prefer to understand the language of our Saviour as applied to an Oriental needle, not the fine steel instrument manufactured by modern Europe, but the piece of burnished iron which varies from two to five inches in length, or the large tape-needle whose ancient specimens in ivory are yet found among the ruins of old cities. The proof of the correctness of our rendering is found in the language of our Lord, that "with men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." We like to look at these curious little doors, and imagine that when our Lord uttered those memorable words: "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate,"‡ etc., he had in his mind these two gates—

* Gen. xxiii., 10–18; Ruth iv., 1–12. † Matt. xix., 24. ‡ Matt. vii., 13, 14.

the one wide, easy, and traversed by the multitude in broad daylight, and the other narrow, high in the step, to be found in the dark, and sought amidst danger by a few anxious travelers.

Besides the gates in the city wall, streets are also sometimes closed with gates, for the greater security of the inhabitants. A watchman is there stationed through the night, who lets proper persons pass through for a small present.



The Strait Gate. (Matt. vii., 14.)

The streets of towns and cities are universally winding and narrow,* and a cool shade is thus obtained, and a draught secured, which is very refreshing in the summer season. They do not present the lively scenes of European streets. All who tread these narrow ways seem intent on business, and whenever the ladies make their appearance they are closely veiled. The houses on either side usually present a dead wall. Here and there, however, an open gate-way gives the passer-by a peep into the porch of some great man's house, and thence into an open court adorned with trees and fragrant flowers. In an upper story, over the gate-way, are a few windows, sometimes latticed, and often projecting into the street. When there happens to be a similar projection on the other side, the two are brought so near to each other that a man could step from his own window into that of his neighbor opposite. But this is never seen among Muslims.

The streets are paved with irregularly-shaped flat stones, in-

* According to Aristotle, this was also the case in ancient times, even in Greece. —GILLIES, "Ancient Greece," vol. i., chap. ix., p. 393.

clining toward the middle, and forming a sort of gutter, where rains produce a running stream which carries off the filth. Underneath the pavement runs the common sewer, and whenever this is opened for repairs the narrow street is completely blocked up, so that men and animals must go round by some other way. Sidewalks of any sort are rare, and the narrowness of the streets makes one liable to be crushed against the wall by a loaded camel, while two horsemen can hardly pass each other. In some towns of Asia Minor the identical pavement of ancient times is found—the high but narrow sidewalks, with occasional stepping-stones for crossings, made with blocks on the precise model of the streets of the exhumed Pompeii. At night the darkness and solitude are complete, for the gate of every house is closed and barred, and no one ventures into the street without a lantern, under penalty of being arrested as a robber. The lone guard keeps himself awake by answering the whistle of his nearest colleague, or by causing the street to resound with an occasional thump of his heavy club upon the pavement. The street dogs, that seem to sleep all day, are now wide awake, and keep up a concert of answering howls. The earliest human sound is the call of the church beadle on feast-days, accompanied by successive rappings with his cane, soon after which is heard the cry of the muezzin calling the Muslims to prayer. The narrowness of Oriental streets has frequently been complained of by the inhabitants of colder latitudes as gloomy and unwholesome, but the difference of climate and manners should be borne in mind. Oriental houses are rarely more than two stories high; broad streets, even though shaded with trees, would be intolerable in the summer heat. In Europe the city houses are compact, and obtain all their ventilation from the street, while in the East the street is only a thoroughfare, the ventilation and the light being furnished by the large court within. In Europe the street is used for the display of pageants, fine horses, handsome carriages, and rich clothing; but in Oriental towns this is all done in the meïdan, or public square, or just without the city walls.

No plan seems to have been followed in the laying out of most Oriental towns. They seem to have grown from the accidental and gradual agglomeration of houses. A city built on a river or by the sea, for instance, has most of its streets par-



A Street in Damascus. (Zech. viii., 5.)

allel to the bank of the stream or sea-shore, or at right angles with it. This is not, however, always the case. Some towns still retain traces of an original plan, even where this plan did not depend upon the natural conformation of the ground. Damascus, which retains its elliptical form, and whose walls, doubtless, occupy their original foundations, was once traversed from its east gate to its western by a street that was "called Straight"—a noble thoroughfare, a hundred feet in breadth, which is still used over a great part of its original site. It was divided by Corinthian colonnades into three avenues, of which the central was used by footmen, while the other two were traversed by horsemen, chariots, and beasts of burden, proceeding respectively either eastward or westward.* A similar street seems to have existed in the city of Palmyra, or "Tadmor in the Wilderness," if we may judge from its four long rows of columns, sixty feet in height, which, commencing on the east at a splendid triumphal arch, stretch, in a straight line, through the centre of the city for a distance of nearly a mile, forming a central avenue and two side ones, one or all of which were once covered, and led to the Temple of the Sun. Traces of such streets and colonnades may still be seen at Gerasa, Samaria, Bozrah, and Apamea. Something of the kind exists in the modern city of Bologna, in Italy, where the church of La Madonna di San Luca, standing on a hill three miles from the city, is connected with it by a continuous colonnade.

The public squares of the East are not, like those of Europe, of a regular shape, surrounded by fine residences, well paved, and ornamented with fountains or statuary; nor have they well-shaded parks or gardens for the use of the public. The meïdan, or "open place," is large, and usually of an irregular form.† It is used for military displays, for the game of the jerid, or javelin, on horseback, and as a camping-ground for camels and other beasts of burden; hence it is never paved. Meïdans are not numerous. Few cities can boast more than one, and they are usually situated in front of the king's or the governor's palace, before the principal mosk, or the largest khan (caravanseraÿ). An open place also often surrounds one of those beautiful fountains, whose inimitable architecture is so

* Porter, "Damascus," vol. i., p. 47. † 1 Kings xxii., 10; 2 Chron. xviii., 9.

much admired by travelers in the East. These structures are of various shapes, some of them having as many as four or six faces, each of which has a faucet and a marble basin. The fountains are often shaded by a projecting roof, and highly ornamented with gilt inscriptions and marble carvings. Some of them are inclosed within a handsome apartment, the sills of whose ample windows are supplied with brass drinking-cups, constantly filled with fresh water for the use of the public by a dervish, who thus accumulates merit for some devout patron either living or dead. Orientals set the highest value upon water, whether for drinking or for purposes of ceremonial purification, and it is often conveyed great distances by means of pipes of baked clay laid under-ground. When a town is well supplied with this important element, every house has its own constantly flowing fountain, whose water fills a large stone trough, pours through a dent in the rim, and, running down the side into the paved court, finds its way to a stone gutter, by which it is carried to the nearest stream. At this fountain is done all the washing of the family, not only of dishes and clothing, but also the daily personal ablutions. The garden tanks, as well as the jetting fountains which ornament the house, are supplied from this source.

An Eastern city is divided into distinct quarters, occupied by different sectaries. It is an abomination for a man of one religion to dwell among people of another. His senses must be offended by sights, sounds, and even odors, suggestive of a faith he abhors. There is also danger of proselytism through social intercourse, and still more of intermarriage, which always implies a change of faith. The ruling race, the Muslim, never fails to appropriate to itself the most agreeable and healthful portion of the town; the Jews are doomed to the worst; but in many walled towns no Christian is admitted, and the Jews alone of all the subject races are allowed the privilege of dwelling within the walls, in memory of their having betrayed their Christian masters when the place was captured by the Muslims.

The business portion of the town is distinct from the dwellings. There are, here and there, indeed, shops for the sale of eatables, such as butchers', bakers', and grocers'; but all articles of wear or of merchandise are sold in a place called the bazar, which will be fully described in a subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER V.

THE FURNITURE OF THE HOUSE.

We have in the preceding chapter described Oriental houses, and agglomerations of them into villages, towns, and cities. We now propose to reverse the process, and examine the interior of the dwelling, its furniture, and arrangements. We shall in a subsequent chapter consider the people who occupy it, their personal appearance, their names, and their garb.

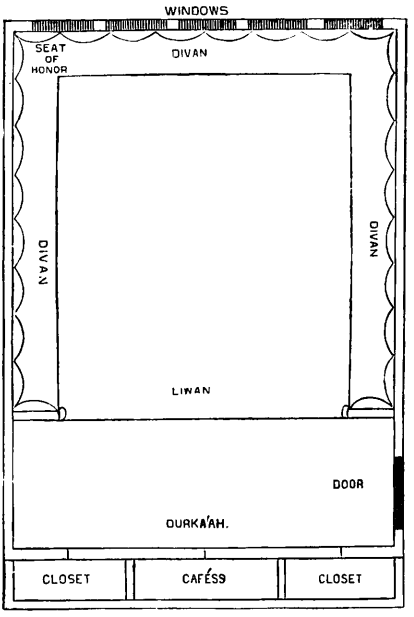
We have already remarked that the houses of the poor often consist of a single room, so small, perhaps, as not even to contain a chimney, the little cooking they can afford being done out-of-doors, where three stones form a rude fire-place, whose smoke has blackened the mud-wall against which it is erected. A saucepan or two, a few wooden spoons, and some basins or bowls of the coarsest earthenware, scrupulously clean, are carefully set in a corner, or ranged along upside down* upon a shelf of wood built into the walls about six feet from the floor.

The furniture consists of a coarse carpet or mat, covering the entire floor, or simply of black goat's-hair cloth, a yard in width, spread at one, two, or three sides of the room next the wall. Bits of carpeting of a better quality, a rug, and sometimes a small, thin cotton mattress are placed upon it, in imitation of a divan, and a straw-filled cushion or two, perhaps, is set against the wall. In a corner of the room, carefully folded and piled, is the bedding of the family, covered with a large white or colored towel. It is unrolled and spread out upon the floor every evening, to be again folded and piled up in the corner in the morning.

The apartments of the wealthy are far better furnished. We have already stated that every room is of an oblong shape, and divided into two parts, one a perfect square, raised six or eight inches above the other, and the latter a parallelogram fronting

* 2 Kings xxi., 13.

the door. The highly ornamented ceiling is divided in the same manner, and often on the line of division, a few feet from the wall on either side, a handsome pillar rises to the ceiling, and forms a graceful arch. The raised square area has a divan on its three sides, resting against the walls, which consists of a permanent wooden frame about a foot high and a yard in width, upon which are laid mattresses stuffed with wool. They are often, however, filled with hay or straw, upon the top of which is laid a thin cotton coverlet. Over the mattresses is spread a covering of chintz, broadcloth, or even richer stuff, the color preferred being a deep scarlet or crimson, and its edge often trimmed with long silk fringe interwoven with gold thread. Even Cashmere shawls sometimes cover the divans of the rich.

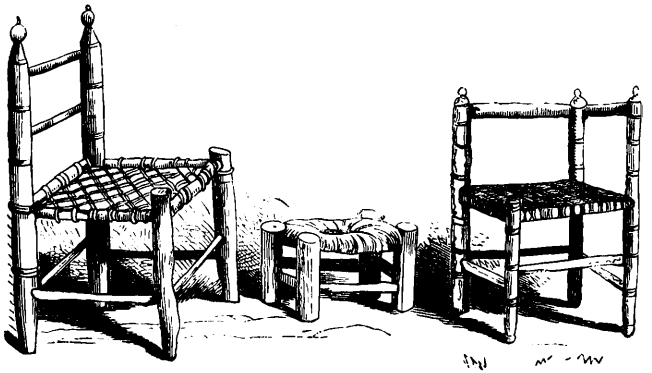


Plan of an Oriental Room.

Against this wall lean large cushions, a yard in length and half a yard in width, which are stuffed with wool which yields to the pressure of the body. One of these is placed at each end of the divan, resting against the light balustrade between the pillars and the wall.

These cushions are covered with stuff differing both in material and color from the divan itself. It is often of carpeting woven expressly, or of some rich material elaborately wrought in quaint patterns, by the women of the household. At one or both corners of the divan is often spread upon the floor a light mattress, with two low cushions, where the inmates of the house sometimes prefer to sit. The general furniture of the apartment is completed by an Egyptian mat, and in the winter season a Koordish, Turkish, or Persian carpet, which covers

the entire floor of the raised portion of the room. Chairs are almost wholly unknown to Orientals. They have a low stool,* chiefly employed in the *cafés;* and a rude kind of chair is occasionally seen, with a seat made of thick twine, a stiff back, and one or two arms; but it is never used in the house, the people preferring to sit with their feet gathered up under them.



Oriental Chairs and Stool. (1 Kings ii., 19; 2 Kings iv., 10.)

The same custom seems to have prevailed in ancient times. The Egyptians, indeed, used chairs often wrought in curious and beautiful patterns. They were probably introduced thence into Greece and the Asiatic colonies. There is, however, no evidence that the custom was ever extensively adopted by Orientals.

The seat of honor, generally occupied by the master of the house, is in the corner opposite the door, where, upon the usual cushions, is set a smaller one, against which he may rest his head and take a nap. He has often by his side a box, or small chest, containing drawers, with writing materials arranged upon it.†

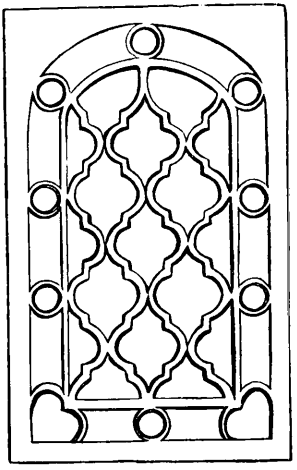
A room is thought to be cheerful in proportion to the number of its windows, and this is certainly the case where the house has a garden of its own which they command, though the view into the central court is often not without its attractions. Orientals are fond of being out-of-doors, and when in the house they get all the light and fresh air they can. They

* 2 Kings iv., 10.

† Wilkinson, vol. ii., p. 176, fig. 416.

like open halls and verandas, and the windows of an apartment often occupy one of its entire sides, being separated from each other only by the thickness of a post.

Glass was first made by the Phœnicians at Tyre, and specimens are not unfrequently found among ancient ruins, yet Orientals are little acquainted with window-glass, which is not manufactured in the country. It is extensively used only in the sea-board towns, the breakage to which it is liable in overland transportation making it an article of luxury in the interior. Windows are low, and closed with solid shutters alone. This is always done at night, and in the day-time, when the weather is cold, or the rain beats in, and in the greatest heat of summer. Between these windows and the ceiling are other smaller ones, intended to admit the light when the lower windows must be shut. They contain a sash of fanciful design, into which are set bits of glass, sometimes colored, instead of which the poor use oiled or plain paper, or a piece of white cloth. In Egypt and other hot countries these upper windows are used chiefly for the purpose of ventilation, being left open or screened with lattice. This system of double windows is in general use in Western Asia, and appears to have been introduced at a very early age, for it is known to have existed among the ancient Egyptians.*



An Upper Window.

It will naturally be inferred that Oriental houses are not very tight, and but poorly adapted for cold weather. It must, however, be remembered that the people depend for keeping warm not so much upon external means as upon the garments they wear, as we shall explain farther on. This accounts for their ability to sit all day long in the coldest weather on the platforms of their open shops, warming their feet by sitting upon them, and saving their hands from being frost-bitten by keeping them in

* Wilkinson, vol. i., p. 14.

their bosoms. Wood is used as fuel in mountainous districts, and wherever it can be easily procured chimneys are common. The fire-place, a picture of which may be seen on page 428, is on one side of the room, where the place of the divan is occupied by a hearth, flanked on either side by slabs of stone or marble, which answer the purpose of a fender. The villagers use no andirons, but set the wood upright against the back of the chimney. In the cities a single andiron is often used, as is represented above. The wood rests upon it at one end, and comes in contact with the coals at the other. The projections noticed in the upright are not mere ornament, but are used in roasting the favorite *kebábs*, which is done in the following manner: Bits of meat about an inch square are strung upon a thin iron spit about a yard in length; there is a hole in the side of the chimney large enough to receive the end of the spit, while the other rests upon one of the projections of the andiron; several spits are sometimes used at once. In the northern parts of the country, particularly in Armenia and Koordistan, where fuel is scarce, the only means for procuring warmth is the "tandoor." The oven we have already described (page 88) is built in the middle of the room, so that its top rises a little above the level of the earthen floor. Here the family bread is baked at least once a day, and as soon as the operation is completed the orifice is closed with a stone slab; a low table is then set over the oven, and over that a thick coverlet is spread, the borders of which extend a considerable distance over the floor. The rude villager's family squat themselves down around this table, drawing the coverlet over the lower portion of their bodies. Here they eat their meals in the coldest weather; and when night comes the mattresses are spread around, and every one sleeps with his feet toward the oven.*

The ordinary tongs of the East are a man's fingers, and it is wonderful to see how a human being can handle a live coal without harm. Still, a pair of iron tongs of primitive workmanship may occasionally be found in the blacksmith shop, and in the dwelling of the wealthy.† As may be seen on page 466, they have no hinge, and the bar across the arms is

* Smith, vol. ii., p. 40; Perkins, p. 156. † Exod. xxv., 38; Isa. xliv., 12.

intended to prevent their flying open too far. There is also a smaller kind of tongs, chiefly used for lighting a pipe, made and sold by the wandering gypsies; and many of the police or guards carry a still smaller one inside of the steel ramrod for their pistols, which is set in their belt. Charcoal is, however, used much more extensively than wood for both warming and culinary purposes. Its small bulk and weight make it easy of transportation, and its use is as universal as that of mineral coal in other lands. When employed simply for heating an apartment, a pan of earthenware is used, narrow at the bottom, and spreading out at the top, where it is above eighteen inches in diameter. The wealthy, however, use a brazier, or stand of brass or copper (*mangal*), two feet in height, in the centre of whose upper surface is set a chafing-dish of like material, which contains the fire. This was doubtless the pan containing a "fire of coals" at which Peter stood and warmed himself in the court of the high-priest's house, and denied his Master.* The accompanying illustration, therefore, will not be without interest to the reader. The pan is first filled with ashes, upon which the servant lays the charcoal and lights it, always in the open air, whether in the court, or on the veranda. There it is gradually kindled by the breeze, or by the brisk use of a coarse feather fan. It is not brought into the room until thoroughly lighted.†



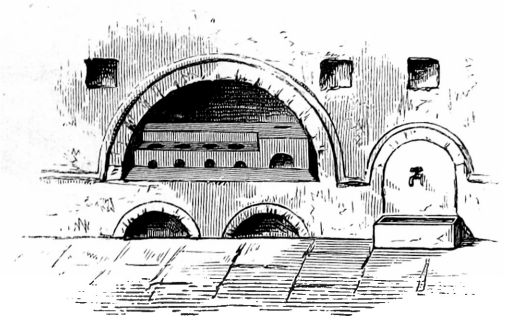
Mangal, or Chafing-dish, for Charcoal. (John xviii., 18.)

Charcoal is also chiefly depended on for cooking purposes. The poor burn it between three stones, set up to support the

* John xviii., 18.

† Gell, in his description of the "house of Pansa," in the exhumed Pompeii, says: "It may be observed that no fire-place exists, nor do any flues remain by which the house could have been warmed by means of a stove; for this purpose, in all probability, only braziers were used with charcoal, as they are frequently found. The Roman remains in England show this method of warming houses to have been common in a colder climate and later age."—GELL'S "Pompeiana," p. 134, edit. 1852.

cooking utensils. But most houses have a kitchen with a broad chimney, within whose arched recess is built a wide bank, or range, of stone or brick, about three feet high, supplied with circular holes to receive the charcoal, which is supported by an iron grating and fanned from an opening underneath, while the pots and saucepans are set upon the holes or upon trivets which raise them above the fire.



Oriental Kitchen-range. (Lev. xi., 35.)

Charcoal is so much esteemed for cooking purposes that travelers generally manage to carry some of it along with them on their journeys, packed in a bag or basket, and a fire of coals is not an uncommon sight in the open country.* The inhabitants of the desert are generally deprived of this valuable commodity, which they sometimes make in the Hauran, or steal from their more favored neighbors. They bake their bread with the grass of the field,† and have only dried camel's manure for their fuel. The inhabitants of Upper Egypt and many parts of Mesopotamia and Syria never taste of any cooked food besides bread. But charcoal is burned in abundance on all the mountains of Asia Minor, in Mount Lebanon and Antilebanon, and in the Hauran; and the supply of this article seems to be as abundant as in ancient times, for it is made not only of trees cut down for the purpose, but the roots of bushes and shrubs are even preferred. Charcoal is conveyed by sea to all the ports of the Levant, and carried through the interior on the backs of mules and camels, being packed in tall and narrow baskets.

* John xxi., 9.

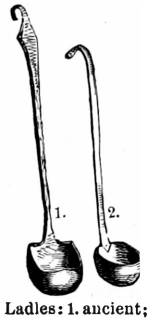
† Matt. vi., 30.

The cooking utensils, of various sizes and depths, with their covers, are always made of whitened copper. This mineral is obtained in large quantities and of the best quality from the



Kitchen Utensils. (Lev. vii., 9.)

mines in Armenia, in the neighborhood of the Euphrates, which are worked exclusively by Greeks, and seem to be inexhaustible, though they have doubtless yielded their treasures to man from time immemorial. Copper and brass are manufactured in several cities of Asia Minor and in Constantinople,* and have become so common throughout the East as to be often used instead of iron, the casting of which is unknown to Orientals.

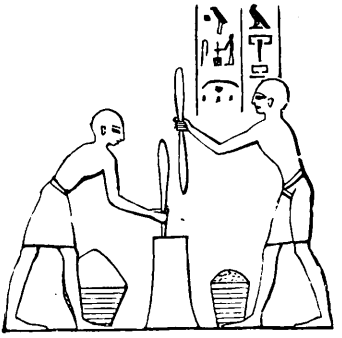


Ladles: 1. ancient; 2. modern. (2. Chron. iv., 11.)

Besides utensils used for cooking, there are others which are considered indispensable in a well-ordered household. If you look about the kitchen, you will not fail to see the hand-mill described on page 87, unless it has been brought out into the court, and two women are seated, turning it round and grinding the wheat of the household into flour, or "boorgool." So necessary is this hand-mill, even to the poorest, that the law of Moses forbade its being taken as a security for debt.† The sound of the hand-mill is a familiar one in the East, and its cessation is aptly mentioned by the prophets as one of the signs of utter desolation.‡ The expression to hang a millstone about

* 2 Tim. iv., 14. † Deut. xxiv., 6. ‡ Jer. xxv., 10; Rev. xviii., 22.

a man's neck and cast him into the sea* is not an uncommon one even now, for old millstones of various sizes are frequently met with which have been thrown away as worn out, cracked, or broken, and so become unserviceable, and, being perforated, they are easier to fasten securely than a common stone.† A well-appointed kitchen is also provided with a small brass mortar and pestle for pounding spices, as well as a much larger one of stone for coffee, rice, and coarser grains. In a small village, however, the people use in common a huge mortar, usually placed near the public fountain or well,‡ often made of an ancient pillar, a capital, or an old heathen altar. There are, however, many articles, such as coffee, spices, and drugs, which in the cities are bought in a pulverized state at the grocer's; they are prepared in special factories upon a large scale, and are pounded in huge mortars by two, three, or four men at once, as we see it represented upon the Egyptian monuments. The kneading-trough is usually one of a set of shallow copper basins, the larger of which are appropriated to the washing of clothes, the largest being half a foot in depth, and a yard or more in diameter. Among the Bedawin, however, as well as in the houses of the poor generally, the kneading-trough is about six inches in depth, and three-quarters of a yard in diameter, and made of an oblong piece of wood dug in the shape of a shallow basin.§ A circular board is used for rolling out pastry or shaping dough into loaves; and the rolling-pins, two of which are often used at once, are no thicker than a man's finger, and about three feet in length.



Two Men pounding in one Mortar. Egyptian Sculpture. (Numb. xi., 8.)

Water for the washing of clothes is boiled in a large kettle or caldron, set at one side of the kitchen-fire, or in the court near the fountain or well, and the clothes, which are always

* Matt. xviii., 6.
† Judg. ix., 53.
‡ Numb. xi., 8; Prov. xxvii., 22.
§ Exod. viii., 3; xii., 34.

washed a few at a time, are hung to dry upon the branches of a tree, or are spread upon a railing or the balustrade of the terrace.

The list of household utensils may be completed by the enumeration of the *jezveh*, or common water-kettle; the coffee-pots, of various sizes; the brass or silver tray provided with tiny coffee-cups of foreign importation, with other cups, called *zarf*, of the same metal, within which the former are placed; small metal plates for sweetmeats, and little spoons to match. A set of pipes, of number and quality according to the means of the master, stands in one corner of the principal room, and several nargilehs are kept in an alcove or cupboard. There are various braziers, or chafing-dishes, for burning charcoal, and the wealthier classes have perfume-censers, often exquisitely wrought in silver or gold filigree and ornamented with precious stones, and graceful bottles to match, for rose-water, which is sprinkled upon guests from a minute orifice at the top of the long and slender neck.



Coffee-pot and Cups.

Sweeping is done with a broom like our own, excepting the long wooden handle. It requires a person to stoop low, hence lost articles of small size are frequently found in the process of sweeping.* It is the common practice thus to search a room. Broom-corn is grown in all parts of Turkey. Coarse brooms, made of a kind of mountain furze, and having a long handle of wood, are used in stables and courts.

The various kinds of earthen vessels for water have already been described. Some are pointed at the bottom, as anciently.† Two or three of the size carried to the fountain usually stand in a well-shaded, cool corner of the court. Similar jars also serve as receptacles for the stores of a household, always kept

* Luke xv., 8.

† Pococke, vol. i., p. 87.



Earthen Jars and Water-pots. (Mark vii., 4.)

under lock and key in the store-room. They consist chiefly of oil, wine, honey, grape-sirup (*dibs*), olives, vinegar, pickles, as well as flour, wheat, rice, and other grains, with dried vegetables and fruits.* The cooked dishes of Orientals generally seem to be overdone to an Occidental taste. Little meat is used, and this is cut up in small bits, or chopped very fine, and serves to flavor the gourds, egg-plants, cabbages, tomatoes, ochras (*bamiah*), etc., with which it is cooked. It is also prepared with quinces, apples, apricots, prunes, chestnuts, and other fruits. Potatoes are unknown. Orientals are very fond of stews thickened by long simmering over the fire, and they largely flavor their food with onions, garlic, and spices. They not only make very palatable dishes of garden vegetables, but cook in like manner a variety of wild plants. These are made into soups,† or, being thoroughly boiled, are eaten with vinegar and oil as a salad. Oil enters largely into their cookery, and is chiefly used as an article of food. The poor are particularly fond of these soups, which not only form the principal dish of their evening meal, but are preferred to any



Ancient Jar.

* 2 Sam. xvii., 28, 29. There is in the Cesnola Collection, at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, a very ancient jar, of curious form, with two spouts: the identical jar is still manufactured in Cyprus, and is used for bringing milk to market.

† 2 Kings iv., 38–40.

thing else on a cold winter morning. They are flavored with a variety of aromatic herbs, and thickened with *leben* (sour curds), or with flour or small bits of paste. A very palatable and nourishing kind of soup or pottage is made of lentils, and flavored with chopped onions. This was doubtless the tempting dish of pottage which cost Esau his birthright.* They mix rice with a certain proportion of chopped meat, well seasoned with pepper and salt, onions, and some favorite herb, and with this preparation they fill small gourds, like cucumbers, egg-plants, or tomatoes, cored for the purpose, and then boil them; sometimes they roll up small portions of the mixture in new and tender grape or cabbage leaves. To this favorite dish the Arabs give the name of "mah-shi" (stuffed), and the Turks "dolma." The Orientals like their dishes damp with gravy, into which they dip their bread, and so fond are they of sweetened food that they often flavor meat stews with honey or grape-juice (*dibs*). They are also very skillful in the preparation of various kinds of pastry, which are not only made for home use, but find such a ready market among them that there are shops in which a single kind of pastry is manufactured throughout the year: some kinds are hawked about the streets, being kept hot on a portable brazier. The lady of the house generally prides herself on her skill in these matters, doing the work with her own hands, instead of leaving it to a servant or slave, and she teaches her daughters the same accomplishment.† Varieties of pastry are always prepared with butter, oil from the olive, or the sesame-seed. They are usually sweetened with honey, and flavored with pounded walnuts or almonds.

The frequent reference in the Scriptures to sweet cakes and oil cakes is an evidence that the same tastes were indulged in anciently as now.‡ They were included among the offerings required to be presented upon the altar of Jehovah, as indeed was the case with the offerings to idol gods.§

Fowls, lambs, or kids are roasted whole upon a spit, or baked, being cooked so tender that they are readily torn in pieces by the hand, a knife being rarely used for the purpose.

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* Gen. xxv., 29–34.

† 2 Sam. xiii., 8, 9.

‡ 1 Kings xvii., 12, 13.

§ Lev. ii., 5; Jer. vii., 18.

We shall not, probably, have a better opportunity to speak of the practice of eating the flesh of animals not raw only, but *living*, a practice which still exists in Abyssinia, and comes, therefore, within the limits of this work. It is hard to believe that the custom existed among the polished Greeks and Romans; yet there is ample evidence that it was practiced at their "Bacchanalian feasts."* We, moreover, learn from its prohibition by Moses that it was practiced by the Jews.† It was forbidden also under the patriarchal dispensation.‡ An instance of it is particularly related in 1 Sam. xiv., 31, 32: Saul, wishing to put a stop to it, obliged his soldiers to bring the oxen to him, that he might see their throats cut upon a stone, and make sure that the animals were dead before the people ate them; he evidently made no attempt to prevent their eating the flesh raw or uncooked. There is now no doubt that this horrid custom still exists among the nominally Christian people of Abyssinia, for it is fully attested by reliable eye-witnesses,§ from whom we learn that it consists in making an incision in the back of a living, struggling ox, tearing off a portion of the skin, and cutting away the throbbing, bleeding flesh, which is immediately devoured, and washed down with hydromel. When the bellowing animal, exhausted by the loss of blood, drops on the ground, his flesh is thought no longer fit to eat. Though this cruel practice has fortunately long disappeared from all other parts of the East, certain practices of the present day may certainly serve to remind us of it. The Muslims profess a great horror of blood, which makes them ceremonially unclean, and are very careful to wash it all from the flesh they eat; the sportsman invariably cuts the throat of every bird or animal he shoots;‖ and the Jews never eat flesh which has not been butchered by their rabbis, claiming that no other is wholly free from blood.

Modern Orientals cook the flesh of an animal as soon as it is slain, without waiting, like Europeans, for that incipient decomposition which makes it more tender but less fresh to the

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* Arnobius, "Adv. Gent. Sextus Impiricus," vol. iii., p. 25; and Selden, "De Jur. Nat. and Gent.," vol. i., p. 7.

† Lev. xvii., 10, 11; Deut. xii., 23.

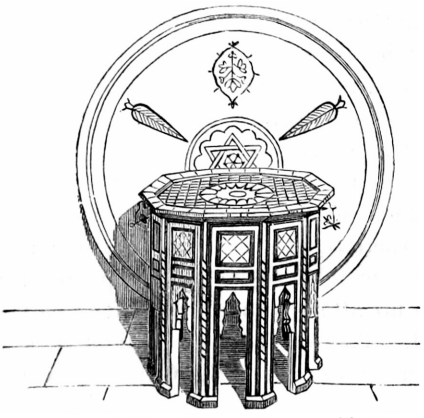
‡ Gen. ix., 4.

§ Bruce, vol. iii., pp. 630–633; Krapf, p. 377.

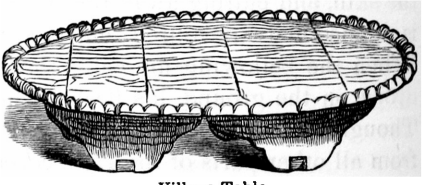
‖ Perkins, p. 270.

taste. Examples occur in the Scriptures.* It was also the practice of the ancient Egyptians.†

The Oriental manner of eating differs essentially from ours. The table is small, about two feet high, eighteen inches wide, and often beautifully carved, or inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Such was the table commonly used anciently in Egypt as now. They had, indeed, chairs and tables to fit; but their use was limited to the wealthiest.‡ In Assyria also we meet with chairs, but they were rare; and one picture represents at once the couch and the chair as used at table.§ But they were foreign importations, as was the mode described in the New Testament. The table is set in the middle of the floor, or against the angle of the sofa, a crumb-cloth being first spread upon the floor, and a large circular tray of whitened copper is set upon it. The master of the house generally sits at the corner of the divan, while his companions take their places around upon the mat or carpet. In the harim, the wife or a female slave waits upon her lord, who eats alone, or with his eld-



Common Table and Tray. (Psa. cxxviii., 3.)



Village Table.



Collation wicker Table.

* Gen. xviii., 7; xliii., 16; Acts x., 13, etc.

† Wilkinson, "Ancient Egypt," vol. i., p. 174.

‡ Ibid., p. 179.

§ Bonomi, p. 401.

est son. The position when sitting on the floor is with the right knee up, so as to support the right hand which "dippeth in the dish."*

In some parts of the country, and particularly in the desert, a bag is first spread out, made of a single circular piece of leather, whose edges are gathered together with a thong. This bag serves to receive crumbs or fragments of food, which it is thought sinful to tread upon by allowing them to drop on the floor. After the meal is finished the bag is taken up, and its contents thrown to the poultry or the street dogs.† The care with which Orientals avoid wasting bread illustrates our Lord's command to his disciples to "take up the fragments" after he had, on two occasions, miraculously fed great multitudes of people.‡ The bag is closed by drawing the thong inserted in the edges, and is then hung up on a peg of the tent-pole, or on a nail in the wall. It is often carried by a traveler as a provision-bag.

When about to eat, many roll up their sleeves and wash their hands for the purpose of cleanliness, and not from a superstitious idea, as the Pharisees of old.§ After sitting down to the table, each one privately exclaims "*Bismillah!*" ("In the name of God"), or he repeats a short form of prayer in accordance with his own faith. When a Christian or a Muslim priest happens to be present, he recites a longer prayer. This accords with the custom both of the ancient Egyptians‖ and of the devout Hebrews.¶ Each one, meanwhile, tucks his sleeves, fastens a towel under his chin, and spreads it out on his knees, or makes use of a long towel which reaches all around the table. Slices of leavened bread or rolls of thin cakes are set before each person on the edge of the tray, and sometimes bunches of green onions or garlic with them. The dinner is served by bringing in the dishes one at a time; they are set in the middle of the tray, and are all eaten with the hand, except soup, rice, and *leben* (sour curds), which are eaten with a peculiarly-shaped wooden spoon. The manner in which the dishes are brought by the scullion from the kitchen to the

* Mark xiv., 20.
† Matt. xv., 27; Luke xvi., 21.
‡ Mark viii., 17, 19, 20; John vi., 12.
§ Matt. xv., 2, 20.
‖ Wilkinson, vol. i., p. 186.
¶ Josephus, "Antiquities," bk. xii., chap. ii., § 12; Mark viii., 6; John vi., 23; Acts xxvii., 35.

dining-room is well expressed in the accompanying picture, copied from the sculptures of ancient Thebes. The poor, who have no spoons, use their fingers for eating *pilaw*, and pieces of bread for the soup and *leben*. The *pilaw* is a national dish, usually made of boiled rice, seasoned with butter, or, more frequently, with the fat of the sheep's broad tail, and sometimes tinged with saffron a delicate yellow, and flavored with pease or a few bits of mutton. It is served in a shallow dish, in which it is piled high in the shape of a cone, and each one eats from the side nearest him. *Leben* is sometimes served at the same time with the *pilaw* in a small side-dish or bowl, each one dipping his spoon into it, or mixing a little with his *pilaw* in the principal dish.



Servant bringing Dishes.

The platters in which the food is served are all of whitened copper, no earthenware being manufactured in the country except that which is made of red clay, and no other is found among the ruins of ancient cities. China dishes now used in the country are of foreign manufacture. The oldest of these are found in the island of Rhodes, and were the property of the Knights of St. John. They are supposed to have been made in Persia, while their large brass platters or trays were brought from Europe, as is evident from the German mottoes they bear.

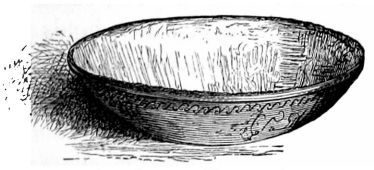
It can not be doubted that the practice of eating with the hand out of a common dish was universal throughout Western Asia in Scripture times. This was evidently the case in the days of Ruth, when Boaz invited her to come and sit beside the reapers in the field, and dip her bread with the rest in the salad or pickle, which is still a favorite with those engaged in gathering the harvest.* So, likewise, the Saviour refers to the same custom in connection with the treachery of Judas.†

Water is not set upon the table, but is given by a servant to those who call for it in a shallow drinking-cup, usually of brass,‡ the attendant first looking into it to see that the water

* Ruth ii., 14. † Matt. xxvi., 23.

‡ This was the case probably to an equal extent among the ancient Egyptians. —RAWLINSON, "Herodotus," vol. ii., p. 52, and note.

is perfectly clear. Some persons take wine or *shorbet* instead of water; the latter drink consists of water flavored with some acid sirup, or with a few drops of orange-flower water. The cup is sometimes of silver, and inscribed with mottoes or the name of the owner. This is particularly the case with the cup used in divination.* The form of the cup in the annexed figure is universally used in all parts of the country; indeed the natives manufacture no other. It is, moreover, found in Egyptian tombs.† The manner of holding it is well represented in an Assyrian picture of the king and his queen, and is correctly described by Xenophon, who says, "Immediately Cyrus is equipped as a cup-bearer, and advancing gravely, with a serious counten-



The Oriental Cup. (Matt. xxvi., 27.)



The Assyrian Cup.

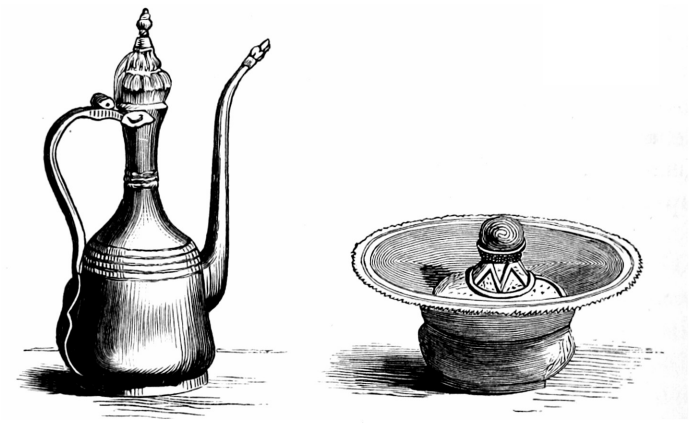
ance, a napkin upon his shoulder, and holding the cup nicely *with three of his fingers*, he presented it to the king." This was probably the form of the cup used at the institution of the Lord's Supper. All who now sit together at table drink

* Gen. xliv., 5.

† Wilkinson, vol. i., p. 180, pl. 193, figs. 2, 3.

out of the same cup after the meal, which is filled for each in turn.*

After eating, every one washes his hands and rinses his mouth with soap and water; the slave, the servant, or, when these are wanting, the son or daughter, or the wife of the host, presents the basin of whitened copper, which rests upon their left hand, and pours water from a ewer held in the right. The basin has a perforated cover, shaped at top like a cup, which holds the ball of perfumed soap. The attendant carries a napkin over



Basin and Ewer. (Matt. xxvii., 24.)

his shoulder,† which is used in wiping the hands and mouth. This napkin is white, and often embroidered, as anciently; another of dark blue, striped with red, is often worn about the loins, like an apron, or tucked into the girdle by any person performing menial duties, especially washing the feet.‡ This manner of washing the hands is in use, not only after a meal, but at any other time in the day, particularly when there is no running fountain in the house; and even in this latter case the master of the house and his guests are always waited upon in the manner above described. Hence the fact that Elisha waited upon Elijah as a body-servant is expressed by saying that he "poured water on the hands of Elijah."§

After dinner the long pipe, or the nargileh, a contrivance

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* Gen. xlii., 2; 2 Sam. xii., 3; Matt. xxvi., 27.
† Layard, vol. i., p. 125.
‡ Luke xix., 20; John xiii., 4.
§ 2 Kings iii., 11.

by which the smoke is made to pass through water before reaching the mouth, is considered indispensable. Coffee is likewise served, though in entertaining strangers it is also passed round before dinner.

It now seems impossible to ascertain how early coffee began to be used by man. There appears to be no allusion to it in the works of ancient writers. It is well known, however, that the berry grows wild in the middle portions of Africa as far north as Abyssinia,* whence the Arabs have a tradition that it was introduced into the province of Yemen, which now produces the best coffee, bearing the name of Mocha, after the name of the city from which it is exported. Coffee was unknown in Europe, however, till the middle of the seventeenth century; for Thevenot, who visited Constantinople in 1655, minutely describes the berry, its use, and effects, in a manner that clearly indicates the novelty of the information he was imparting, yet he refers to its universal use in all parts of Turkey.

Orientals take two regular meals a day: the one early in the morning before going to their business, which mainly consists of the remains of their evening meal; the other, and principal meal, when they return home at sunset. About noon, however, they partake of an informal luncheon, consisting of the fruits of the season, dried fruits, olives, or cheese, etc., with plenty of bread. The latter is, indeed, the staff of life with all Oriental nations. They consume it in large quantities, and the poor seldom complain if they have a good supply of bread. In all the languages of the East bread is a synonym for food; so that to speak of eating bread at a man's house signifies to be entertained by him at dinner,† and a famine or an abstinence from all food is called a lack of bread.‡ As soon as it is dark the poor go at once to bed. In villages the only light at night is from the blazing fire on the hearth, or a stick of pitch-pine, which is carried about in the hand or set in a chink in the wall.§

We have spoken of the lamps in which olive-oil is burned in olive-producing districts (see page 132). But even there the common tallow-candle is much used, and preferred for

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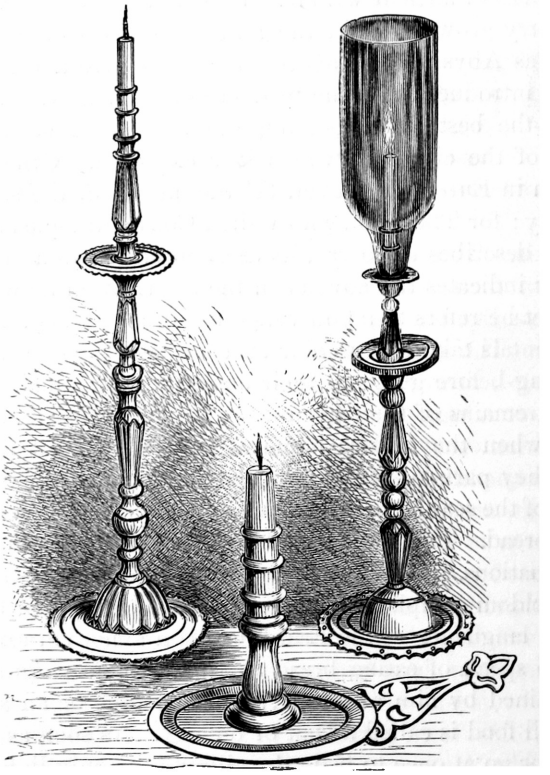
* Bruce, vol. ii., p. 411.

† 2 Sam. ix., 13.

‡ Exod. xxxiv., 28; 2 Kings xxv., 3.

§ Judg. vii., 16; Zech. xii., 6.

lighting the rooms in which they sit of an evening.* Candles are made of mutton-tallow, and have a thick cotton wick which is snuffed with the fingers, or with a small tongs used in lighting a pipe with a burning coal. Snuffers of brass are occasionally seen, so constructed as to be more easily cleaned than our own. Candles are set upon candlesticks of brass, silver,

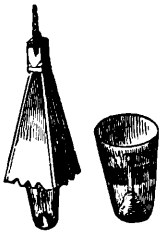


Candlesticks. (2 Kings iv., 10.)

or gold, never having more than a single stem.† The largest of these are four feet high, and are set in the middle of the floor.‡ The common size, however, is about a foot in height, and is set upon the little table used for the family meals.§ The table in the little room prepared for Elisha by the good Shu-

* Luke xv., 8.
‡ Matt. v., 15.
† Chardin, vol. iii., p. 166.
§ 2 Kings iv., 10.

namite was simply designed to set the candlestick upon, for it would be contrary to all usages of Oriental society that the prophet should take his meals elsewhere than at the table of his host. Many people keep a light burning all night, and not a few would consider their lot a hard one to bear if obliged to pass the night in total darkness.* A glass cup is suspended by a wire passing around its rim from the ceiling at one corner of the room. It is filled with water and oil, and a small floating wick gives light enough for moving about at night. This little lamp is kept burning by superstition at the tombs of Muslim and Christian saints, and constitutes the means of illumination on special religious festivals. This kind of lamp was used by the ancient Egyptians in their illuminations, particularly during the feast of Minerva, but the cup was generally of earthenware instead of glass.† The salt in the oil doubtless constituted it a sacrifice.‡ It should, however, be remembered that oil must always be salted, or it would not keep.



Hanging Lamps. (Prov. xx., 20.)

The lanterns of the present day, both the large kind, which is permanently hung, and the small portable kind carried about at night, are made of a frame of tin set with glass; but the ancient type is still in use, consisting of two circular pieces of perforated copper for the top and bottom of the lantern, the latter having a tallow candle-end set in its centre, while the sides, which give it a cylindrical form, are of waxed cloth, parchment, or even common paper, folded in rings or kept in shape by means of wire. The handle is at the top, and the whole folds down into a very small space. This was doubtless the kind of lantern used by the servants of the high-priest when led by the traitor Judas into the Garden of Gethsemane.§ Torches are sometimes used for the purposes of illumination on occasions of marriage or other festivities, being held aloft by the hand or fixed in the ground. These are called "meshal," and have already been described in connection with night fishing (page 70).

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* Job xviii., 5, 6.

† Wilkinson, vol. i., p. 298.

‡ Lev. ii., 13.

§ John xviii., 3.

There is a kind of torch which is used by the police of Cairo, and is called "shealeh," and may throw some light upon the means employed by Gideon and his three hundred men to terrify the Midianites and overthrow them.* It burns without a flame, except when waved through the air, which causes it at once to burst into a blaze. Its burning end is covered with a small earthen jar, or "pitcher," and it thus answers the purpose of a dark lantern; but experienced thieves are set upon their guard by the small light it emits.†

There remains a portion of the furniture of the house of a man in comfortable circumstances which we have not yet described. The dining-room and sitting-room are identical, as we have already seen; and so is the bedroom. In that portion of the apartment already described as lying nearest the door, and as being several inches lower than the raised square around which is the divan, a large cupboard or closet is built in the wall, where the bedding of the night occupants of the chamber is stowed away.‡ The bed is spread at night in the raised portion of the room; but in cold weather the bed is made in the closet itself. The mattress is stuffed with wool, which lies loose in its bag-like cover, and is shaken and smoothed each time the bed is spread. Over it is laid a sheet, one of the sofa cushions being often placed at the head to support the pillow, which is narrow and flat, and is filled with wool or cotton. It is often covered with gay-colored silk or satin, usually red. The pillow-case leaves the pillow uncovered at both ends, and has a broad wrought edge through which the bright shade of the silk is seen. The coverlet, thickly wadded with wool or cotton, which makes it stiff and heavy, is covered with flowered chintz, or with crimsoned silk, satin, or brocade. The upper sheet is not spread upon the bed, but is sewed to the "chaf," or coverlet, every time it is changed, by turning back and slightly stitching its edges. No night-dress is used, and of the cloth-

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* Judg. vii., 16, 19. † Lane, vol. i., p. 152; Bruce, vol. iv., p. 699.

‡ This closet is probably alluded to in 2 Kings xi., 2, and 2 Chron. xxii., 11; it would certainly be an excellent place of concealment. It is called a *cafess*, or cage, by the Turks (Stanley, "Jewish Church," vol. ii., p. 436); but the Egyptians call *cafess* the wicker mattress on which they spread their beds in warm weather, a custom they have derived from their ancestors.—RAWLINSON'S "Herodotus," vol. ii., p. 55, note.

ing worn through the day only the outer garments are laid aside; but in the warmer parts of the country, and in the summer season, many people take off all their clothes at night, and sleep under a slight covering, unless they can lie out-of-doors. The turban is carefully taken off, and laid upon a chair or stool never used for any other purpose,* and a simple cotton skull-cap is worn in its stead. The lower classes, however, undo the turban every night and make it up again in the morning, while the women wear that same head-dress night and day, never re-arranging it except at the bath. It may here be remarked that the people of Western Asia transgress in one particular, as even they themselves acknowledge, the principles of hygiene, for they keep their heads bundled up and warm, while their feet and even lower limbs are often quite bare and cold; this is very commonly the case in sleep, for they draw up the heavy coverlet over their heads, while they leave their feet exposed, and often resting upon the cold floor, a practice peculiarly dangerous for the sick, who are often left to themselves during the entire night. The custom of sleeping in the clothes worn through the day seems to date as far back as the time of Moses, as we may infer from Exod. xxii., 26, 27. Men, when working during the heat of the day, throw off their outer garments, and put them on again when they are done; and often the only night covering of the poor is their day-clothing. In all the languages of the East a person is said to be "naked" when he is simply divested of his outer garments, and wears nothing but his drawers and his shirt, which hangs over them. It was in this sense only that Peter was "naked" when our Lord appeared to him and the other disciples on the shore of the Lake of Gennesaret.† Absolute nudity is considered a disgrace to which no one, with the exception of children and youth, voluntarily submits.‡ The narrative contained in Mark xiv., 51, refers to the practice of sleeping almost or entirely unclad, as at the present day in Palestine and Egypt, in the house. The covering consists of a single sheet, known as an article of commerce by the Arabic name *heram*.§ When we read that Saul "lay down naked" among the prophets "all

* Lane, vol. i., p. 43. † John xxi., 7. ‡ 2 Sam. x., 4.
§ Lane, "Modern Egyptians," vol. ii., p. 7.

that day and all that night," we understand that he threw off his outer garments.* So with the ironical language of Michal to David: "How glorious was the king of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself to-day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!"† for it is distinctly stated that the king "was girded with a linen ephod" when Michal saw him through a window or lattice (verse 16). The expression "walking naked," in Isa. xx., 2, is explained by Jonah iii., 6, which refers to the custom of wearing the sackcloth over the under-garments. The same mode of expression existed among the Greeks;‡ and we have heard a woman apologize for "appearing naked" when she was surprised in her working garb.§

Parents sleep in the same apartment with their children,‖ unless the parents are wealthy, and can leave them in the care of servants.¶ We have known a mother to sleep in the same bed with her five little children, and this fact alone proves that beds must have been spread on the floor in ancient times as at the present day.** It must, however, be borne in mind that the bed is often spread upon a permanent platform, built of wood at one corner of the room, with a low railing around it. We have repeatedly seen this in the colder climates of the higher regions of Western Asia; and even in Egypt the closet in which the bedding is kept, which is generally raised a foot or two from the floor, is used during the winter as an alcove, which is a warmer place to sleep in.†† The expression to come down from a bed or to go up to it seems to indicate the prevalence of a similar custom in Bible times.‡‡ We have already referred to the custom of keeping a jar of water near the head of the bed for drinking in hot weather, and particularly for the use of the children.§§ It should also be added that Orientals go early to bed, sitting up but a short time after candle-lighting, and always rising with the dawn. They do sometimes sit up till a late hour of the night when entertaining guests, or meeting with old friends from whom they have been long separated.

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* 1 Sam. xix., 24.
† 2 Sam. vi., 20.
‡ Plutarch, "Lives," Lyc. 21.
§ Job xxii., 6.
‖ Luke xi., 7.
¶ Exod. ii., 9.
** Matt. ix., 6.
†† Lane, vol. i., p. 22.
‡‡ 2 Kings i., 4.
§§ Matt. x., 42.

In the summer season the favorite sleeping-place is the flat roof or terrace where the bedding is spread in the open air. In the mountain villages, particularly of Koordistan, platforms are erected, supported by four upright posts, and used as summer sleeping-places, the better to secure the cool night-breeze, as well as to escape the vermin and mosquitoes which infest the huts at that season of the year. In Lower Mesopotamia, in Mossul and Bagdad, the houses are furnished with cellars of solid masonry, in which the inmates spend the hottest hours of the day.

Our picture of the interior of an Oriental house would not be complete without a description of what is usually called the "Turkish bath," but which, as is now well known, was only adopted by them when they conquered Western Asia. It does not exist in the country whence they came, and was evidently known both to the Greeks and the Romans as having been introduced from the East. This system of bathing probably originated with the Babylonians, whom the earliest historical records represent as employing it with a degree of refinement scarcely reached at the present day. Yet we find undoubted references to it in very old Egyptian sculptures.* The houses of the rich frequently contain a bath of their own of smaller dimensions than the public bath, and connected with the harim, or women's apartments, and the fair inmates are extremely fond of whiling away their time and enhancing their personal charms by its frequent use.† The public bath is a stone structure of great solidity, erected by the munificence of persons who seek thus to atone for their crimes and appease divine justice, or, as is more frequently the case, as a profitable source of income. The number of these baths in Oriental cities is often very great: Cairo, for instance, with a population of not over two hundred thousand souls, possesses some seventy or eighty.‡

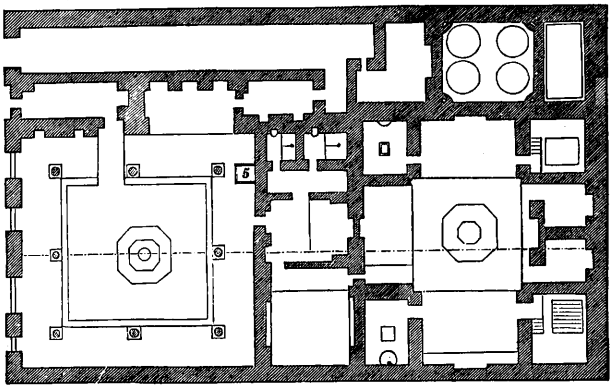
There is, properly speaking, no wood-work about a bath; it is wholly built of stone or brick, and is therefore fire-proof. As many towns in Turkey are occasionally destroyed by con-

* See the details in fig. 479 of Wilkinson's "Ancient Egypt," vol. ii., p. 349 (*Harper*), which represents with remarkable accuracy the processes peculiar to the Turkish or Oriental bath.

† Esth. ii., 12.

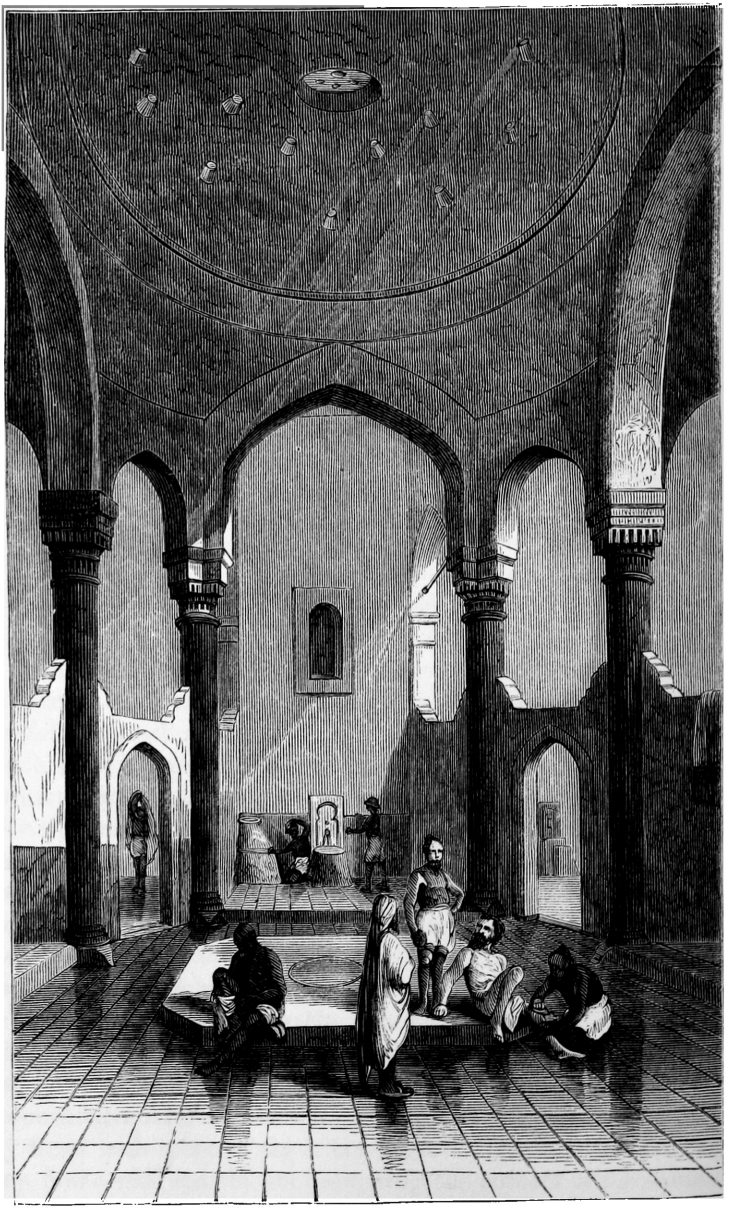
‡ Lane, vol. ii., p. 36.

flagration, either wholly or in part, the street becomes raised each time higher than before, so that the floor of the bath not unfrequently occupies a lower level than the street. The plan of the building differs somewhat, according to the water supply and other causes; yet there is a general uniformity, to which we shall confine our description, omitting all unimportant and varying details.



Plan of an Oriental public Bath. (Ezek. xxiii., 40.)

The floors of the bath proper are built upon vaults which contain fire-places and caldrons (*hazneh*) for heating the water which supplies the fountains. The floor and walls of the bath contain pipes of burned clay, terminated at the roof by others made of tin or lead, which carry off the surplus steam. By this means the floor and walls of the main building are so heated that they can not be touched with the hands or feet, while the steam frequently escapes through the cracks and crevices. The interior of the bath varies little in form; there is a central area, either square or octagonal, in the midst of which is a basin of tepid water three feet deep, or in its stead a platform of smooth marble, two feet higher than the floor. This area is covered by the principal dome of the bath, lined on the outside with lead, and admitting the light by means of concentric circles of holes, four inches in diameter, and tightly fitted with a cap of thick bottle-glass. Around the central are four small apartments occupying the corners of the square building, each covered with its own little dome, perforated in like manner, and supplied with its fountain. Three of the



Interior of an Oriental Bath.

spaces which lie between these four rooms resemble large alcoves, being called *liwans*, and are each provided with a fountain, consisting of a marble basin against the wall, with two faucets for hot and cold water. The number of the fountains, however, depends upon the size of the bath. The fourth space is occupied by a small wooden door, which shuts with a slam whenever pushed open, having a weight attached to the end of a rope which passes over a pulley; it leads to an anteroom. Another similar door opens thence into the dressing-room. The anteroom between the dressing-room and the bath is of medium temperature. There bathers often sit a while before going within, or where they may cool off after their bath, and wrap themselves in dry towels. It is provided with latrines. We have now reached the dressing-room, proceeding from the interior of the bath outwardly; it is in reality the first apartment entered from the street, and forms a sort of vestibule or anteroom to the bath. It is sometimes built in as solid a style as the bath itself, but more commonly contrasts with it in lightness of material and plainness of architecture.

Entering from the street into this dressing-room, the most noticeable object is a platform on the right and left, raised several feet from the floor, upon which are the couches of the bathers, each spread upon its own slightly raised wooden frame, arranged in a row with the head against the wall. The centre of this antechamber is occupied by a marble basin, square or octagonal, supplied with water, and often with a jetting fountain. Here flowers are kept fresh, and diffuse a grateful fragrance, while lemons float on the surface of the water, cooling for use in preparing lemonade. On the slightly raised platform by the side of the door sits the master of the bath upon his little divan, with a cupboard close by, from which he dispenses the fresh towels, and a chest in which he keeps his money, and the watches, jewels, purses, and other valuables intrusted to his care by the bathers. At one side of the door leading into the interior of the bath is a stone bench, upon which lighted coals smoulder under ashes, where a little coffee-pot is ever simmering. A stand for pipes completes the furniture of the apartment. The windows of this lofty and spacious room are set very high, near the ceiling, and up there ropes are fastened across from wall to wall, upon which are hung

to dry the towels of the establishment. These are white and dark blue striped with red; and one of the attendants makes use of a long pole in spreading them upon the lines, or in taking them down to fold and put away.

The customers as they come in are received with a welcome from the master of the bath, and selecting a couch, each one for himself, proceed to unrobe. When the visitor is a well-dressed man, and particularly if accompanied by a servant, he is received with special attentions, and one of the best couches is shown him. Couches intended for the use of more honorable guests are often spread in a room partitioned off from the rest by a light wall or lattice-work. As the customer undresses, he folds each garment upon a towel provided and spread out for the purpose, whose corners he afterward laps over each other or ties together, and places the bundle on his couch, setting his shoes at the foot, sole to sole.

During the process of undressing one of the attendants brings a large blue towel, which he fastens around the waist of the bather, so as to cover his form down to the ankles, and a long white towel is thrown like a scarf around his shoulders. He is then furnished with plain wooden clogs or pattens, and proceeds to the bath, the door of which is opened by an attendant, who claps his hands as a signal that a fresh customer is going in. If the bather should prefer to accustom himself gradually to the heat, a towel with a cushion upon it is spread on the stone platform of the first room, which answers to the Roman *tepidarium*. Here he reclines, smoking his pipe and sipping his coffee, and then proceeds through the inner door into the bath proper, where he stretches himself out at full length upon the marble platform in the centre, a soft towel being spread under him, and his head resting upon a cushion filled with straw. He now wears only the blue towel around his waist, and while waiting for the perspiration to start thoroughly from the pores of his skin, he can amuse himself counting the holes in the dome overhead, or, like Noosreddin Khoja, admiring the echoes of his own voice; for every sound is re-echoed and multiplied to such a degree that the noise of the inner bath forms the greatest contrast with the quiet of the dressing-room, where the song of the canary or blackbird often alone breaks the stillness. Here

the business of the attendants, called *tellak*, consists in performing various operations for the bathers, keeping the floors clean, washing out the towels, etc. They spend the whole day in the bath, girt with a simple towel, coming out occasionally into the dressing-room to cool off and smoke a pipe. The only pay they receive from the proprietor is an occasional present; but they rely on the generosity of those who patronize the bath; and this being not uniform in degree, they attend on customers by turns, in the order in which they come. Hence the number of these servants in a bath always indicates the extent of its patronage, and is greater on Friday mornings, or just before some great festival, than on other occasions. They are generally young men from sixteen to twenty-five, who thus seek to acquire a little money, and enter into some more agreeable business. They complain that this employment is enfeebling to the constitution, yet we have known men of fifty who had followed it from their youth.

The *tellak* begins his operations by a sort of kneading process, the object of which is to open the pores, and cause the perspiration to flow freely; he then distends the cartilages of the joints, making each to crack in turn, beginning at the fingers and going through the entire body even to the toes, not omitting the joints of the neck and ribs. This operation is performed partly while the bather lies upon his back; he then turns upon his chest, and the *tellak* finishes the process in that position. Next the *tellak* inserts his hand in a small hair-cloth bag, and, wetting it occasionally, rubs down the whole body most thoroughly, a process which removes the imperceptible deposit left upon the skin, and constitutes the chief peculiarity of this mode of bathing.

The bather then sits down upon a small wooden frame, or upon the marble floor beside the fountain, in one of the alcoves, or within one of the small side rooms, and the *tellak*, opening the faucets, fills the little marble basin with water of a temperature to suit him. The operation of soaping the head or shampooing now begins; this is repeated three times, a great quantity of water being poured upon the head after each rubbing in of the soap, by means of a shallow brass basin a foot in diameter. The *tellak* then brings a larger brass bowl, filled with the soft string-like fibres of the palm-tree (leef), which he

rubs with the soap and lathers the whole body; then basin after basin of clean warm water is poured over the body till it is thoroughly rinsed, and the bathing is completed. But when there is a tank of hot water, the bather often winds up with a plunge, after which a dry towel is wrapped around his body, another envelopes his shoulders, and, when his head has been well wiped, two more towels are bound turban-like around it. Placing his feet in a pair of clogs, upon which has just been poured a basin of warm water, he then repairs to the dressing-room, where he lies down upon the couch prepared for him. There he reclines and gradually cools off, dozing, sipping coffee or shorbet, or smoking his pipe. When sufficiently rested, an attendant thoroughly dries his body and his hair, and as soon as he is dressed presents him with a mirror, and a comb resembling our fine combs, though larger. The mirror is circular, and about six inches in diameter, having a handle, and being ornamented with mother-of-pearl. That used by the ladies usually bears the picture of a belle on the reverse, to serve



Ancient Bathing.

probably as a model in arranging their own toilets.* Just before the bather takes his leave, he distributes his fees severally to the owner of the bath, the *tellak* who waited on him, the *caffejy*, or dispenser of the coffee, pipes, and other refreshments, and other servants of the establishment. Even these largesses scarcely raise his expenses to the sum of half a dollar, and as he retires one and all dismiss him with a "godspeed" and "come again."

The identity of the modern processes of the bath with those of the Egyptians is strikingly illustrated by the accompanying plate from Wilkinson.

We have detailed the *ordinary* process of bathing, but other operations are often performed in the bath; some of these are of a medicinal character, such as cupping, searing the flesh for rheumatic complaints, etc. The depilatory is used after the friction of the body with the hair-cloth bag, and before the application of soap. Modern Orientals, like the ancients, consider hair upon the body a great blemish, and use a variety of means to remove it. Their effect, however, is only temporary, and often develops it all the more. We have repeatedly seen men in the bath who reminded us of hairy Esau, and who certainly surpassed the Mexican specimen of anatomy preserved in the Paris Museum. Some content themselves with the use of the razor; and this must be considered a very ancient practice, for it was enjoined by the Mosaic law as part of the purification required of the Levites for the service of the Tabernacle.† Others employ quicklime mixed with orpiment, as did the ancient Romans.‡ The Arabs use a kind of resin, called *libanshamy*, in a melted state, and sometimes they simply rub on the ashes of charcoal. They also pretend to accomplish the same object, once for all, by the application of bats' blood to the body of a new-born infant.§ Instead of these external applications, however, the body is sometimes rubbed with a piece of pumice-stone or with a clay rasp, which is usually employed upon the soles of the feet. The ancient Babylonians made use of the pumice-stone for the removal of the hair of the body and even of the beard, as we read in the story of Parsondes, related by Nicolaus of Damascus.‖

* Perkins, p. 283. † Numb. viii., 7. ‡ Thevenot, p. 32.
§ Russell, "Aleppo," vol. i., p. 134; Lane, "Modern Egyptians," vol. i., p. 27.
‖ Layard, vol. ii., p. 256.

The women frequent the bath more than the men. The bathing establishments of the latter are situated in the business part of the town, while those appropriated to the use of the women, and which far outnumber the others, stand among the dwelling-houses, where few men are seen in the day-time in the streets. There are, however, baths which men may frequent during certain hours of the day, or on certain days of the week. The women's baths are appropriated, on different days of the week, to the exclusive use of persons of different sects, in order to avoid the supercilious and often unkind treatment which Christian and Jewish women receive from their Muslim sisters. It would be a most heinous offense for a man to break into a woman's bath. Mohammedan law exercises a most jealous care over women, not only as a protection to the weak, but also to guard the rights of the husband and father. It may be here remarked that the people of Western Asia are unsurpassed by any others in the care with which they cover such parts of their persons as they deem it immodest to expose.* Little children under the age of ten, particularly among the poor, are indeed seen running about in a state of nature.† So it is in the bath, where it is thought superfluous to waste any covering for little boys or girls up to the age of ten or twelve; but this is all changed when they reach the age of puberty. A man never bathes in the sea, or any other public place, without wearing a pair of drawers or a cloth tied around his waist; as much can not be said of some Western nations. When women bathe out-of-doors they are careful to choose an isolated spot, and, like the daughter of Pharaoh when she came down to wash herself at the river, set one of their companions to walk along by the river and give the alarm. The nomad and village women wash themselves and the clothes they wear in a retired spot on the bank of some neighboring river, where, if a man chance to come suddenly upon them, they set up such

* Herodotus says that "among the Lydians, and indeed among the barbarians generally" (by which he means here the people of Western Asia), "it is reckoned a deep disgrace, even to a man, to be seen naked." Morier speaks of having been struck with the same thing in Persia ("Second Journey," p. 60). Mohammed forbids his followers to expose themselves indecently in the sight of a person of either sex.—TAVERNIER, "Seraglio," p. 44; 2 Sam. x., 4; Rev. iii., 18.

† Lane, vol. i., p. 67; Spencer, vol. i., p. 358.

a chorus of cries and curses that he is glad to escape out of sight. Women of doubtful character alone bathe in a quasi public manner, like the harlots in the Pool of Samaria.* Layard notices a custom he witnessed among the Nestorians inhabiting the mountains of Koordistan, as well as among the Yezidies, their neighbors, which is so much opposed to the prevailing ideas of the East, that we should feel inclined to deny the correctness of his statements were they not sustained by so reliable an authority. He says it is the general custom for the women to bathe in the most public manner on the river banks, walking about unconcernedly, not seeking in the least to screen themselves from the sight of men; that they perform their weekly ablutions outside their cabin doors, and that when a Muslim bids them "get out of sight," they coolly reply, "Turn your head the other way."† This is utterly at variance with the feelings of Oriental women elsewhere, whose general modesty of demeanor can not be denied, so that the only way we can explain the existence of the custom cited above is to give it a historic origin. The mountain Nestorians originally inhabited the plains of Mesopotamia, and so did the Yezidies, unless they came from the parts nearer the Persian Gulf. Sabeanism was once the religion of both, and still exists among the Yezidies, The practice alluded to may have some connection with it. In Egypt, indeed, where the country is intersected by canals and overflowed in the summer, it is not uncommon to come upon a group of girls, whose graceful motions, as they swim toward some neighboring village, can only be compared to those of a flock of aquatic birds. The women of Mesopotamia who live on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates provide themselves with a skin bag, which they inflate whenever they wish to cross the river, taking off their clothing and tying it upon their heads; and Bruce speaks of Arab girls on the south-eastern coast of the Red Sea who swam a mile to his ship, unmindful of the sharks, in quest of stibium with which to color their eyebrows, and who seemed perfectly unconscious of the impropriety of their nude condition in the presence of men.‡ But these are exceptional cases,

* Josephus, "Antiquities," book viii.. chap. v.. § 6.

† Layard, "Nineveh," vol. i., pp. 170, 186, 232, 294. ‡ Bruce, vol. i., p. 317.

and do not affect the truth of the general statements made above.

But to return to the bath of the women. They must all resort to it at least once a week, and they then spend the whole day in it, going early in the morning and returning late in the afternoon. Provisions are taken along with them for a hearty meal. The slaves, if there be any, carry large bundles of clean clothes and towels. The girls and the boys, too, under age, form a part of the group, and the house is shut up for the day. As may well be supposed, the bath is generally crowded with women and children of all ages, and the noise is such as to be proverbial in all the languages of the East. Every thing is done leisurely. The time is spent as much in gossip as in actual ablutions; and as neighbors meet here from time to time, they not only communicate such items of news as they may possess, but share their meals together. Some of the elder matrons take this opportunity to examine the physical attractions of the young marriageable maidens, with a view to the choice of a bride from among them for their sons or nephews, for it would be difficult in such a place to conceal the smallest blemish or defect. The experienced dame who has the general charge of the bath directs the proper application of the henna, with which are dyed the palms, finger-tips, and feet of women of every age, from the grandmother down to the infant, the little boys included; but special interest attaches to this operation when performed for a young virgin brought by her relations to the bath to be decked for her bridal.

In some countries, particularly in Egypt or Arabia, a species of tattooing is practiced. Small figures in lines are punctured, by means of seven needles tied together, upon the forehead, the cheeks, the lips, the chin, the arms, the middle of the breast; the mark being rendered permanent by the insertion of indigo or other substances, which give it a bluish tint. In Persia, the ladies "curiously stain their fair bodies with a variety of fantastic devices, not unfrequently with the figures of trees, birds, and beasts, sun, moon, and stars. This sort of pencil-work spreads over the bosom, and continues down as low as the navel, round which several radiated figures are generally painted. All this is displayed by the style of their dress, every garment of which, even to the light gauze chemise, is open

from the neck to that point."* The operations of the bath are essentially the same with the women as with the men, though the rough bag is less used and the soap more plentifully. The washing of the head occupies much time, as the hair must be plaited in fine braids. The bathing operations are often intermitted, members of the same family or party performing mutual offices, so that the task of the attendants is greatly diminished; slaves perform the duties of the *tellak* for their mistress and her children, and each party comes provided with the napkins, basins, soap, etc.; nor is the meal, or picnic, for which the materials have been brought from home or purchased from a neighboring shop, the least interesting part of the programme; for the operations of the bath conspire, with the social character of the scene, to give a relish to the plainest fare. Hence the *public* bath is generally preferred by the fair to that of the private dwelling. The latter is found only in the residences of the wealthiest citizens and chief officers of state; it is always connected with the harim, whose numerous inmates, having abundance of leisure, and being generally confined to the premises, are wont to make it their daily resort. This luxury their neighbors are frequently invited to share with them, and thus vary the monotony of their lives. The deprivation of the bath is one of the severest punishments an irritated husband can inflict upon his wife or slave. The frequent bathing of the women of the wealthier class, together with their seclusion, gives a clearness and delicacy to their complexions which is attributable to no other cause. We ourselves have seen hundreds of Circassian girls on their way from their native land to Constantinople to be sold as slaves to rich Turks, after having undergone a system of physical "purifications,"† which they seem to have inherited from the Babylonians and Persians; and having seen many after they had been introduced into Turkish harims, we could with difficulty persuade ourselves that they belonged to the same race. They are purchased by slave-merchants when they reach the capital, and, being divested of the tight leather corset which incases their forms from infancy, and hinders their healthy development,‡ they pass through a system of training, lasting several

* Ker Porter, vol. i., p. 233. † Esth. ii., 12. ‡ Spencer, vol. ii., p. 206.

months, and comprising not only frequent ablutions in the bath, with a lavish use of perfumes, but also a peculiar diet, and the practice of a variety of gymnastic exercises. We have alluded to this subject because of the parallel contained in the second chapter of Esther, revealing a condition of society among the higher classes in the capital of Persia remarkably similar to that of the modern capital of Turkey.

CHAPTER VI.

THE INMATES OF THE HOUSE.

We now turn to the inmates of the house, and consider their names, their personal appearance, and their dress. Family names are a modern European invention, though an approach to this custom existed among the Romans. The word Pharaoh seems to have been used somewhat in the same sense by the Egyptians, and even in Western Asia we occasionally meet with a sort of family name. In Europe such a name as Johnson, for instance, originally meant the son of John, but now means a member of a certain family. So in Asia Minor, among the Turks, the well-known family names of Chapanoghloo and Elezoghloo were originally given only to the sons of Chapan and Elez. The power and wealth of these families lasted for several generations, and so did the name, which perished when they were reduced to the common level. Among the Bedawin every man bears the name of his tribe, as the Jews did of theirs, and they are all called Beni Ishmael, or sons of Ishmael,* as the Hebrews bore the general name of Beni Israel, or sons of Israel (or Jacob).†

We make use of family names chiefly for the purpose of distinguishing from each other persons having the same Christian name. Orientals accomplish this object in a variety of ways; but there is no fixed rule for the adoption of any one of them. The matter is decided by the custom prevailing in each locality. It often happens that a man is engaged in business in some town at a distance from his home; he is then called by the name of the town to which he belongs. So the great Constantinople banker was called Hohannes Jezaïrli (John of Algiers); and so in the Old Testament we have, among many other instances, that of Eliezer of Damascus;‡ and in the New, Saul of Tarsus.§ The distinguishing name is sometimes de-

* 1 Chron. i., 31. † Gen. xlii., 5. ‡ Gen. xv., 2. § Acts ix., 11.

rived from a man's nationality or religion, which in the East are generally confounded. So of old Abraham was called the Hebrew;* Mordecai, the Jew;† the apostles, Galileans.‡ These and similar appellations are constantly met with all over the East.

Another mode of distinguishing men by their names is to mention their occupation, as, for instance, the well-known Protestant preacher in Beirut, Tannoos el Haddâd (Anthony the blacksmith); Abramaki the broker, of Smyrna; and, in the Scriptures, Simon Magus (the magician); Demetrius the silversmith;§ Simon the tanner.‖ Closely allied to this kind of surname are nicknames, derived from some physical or mental peculiarity, or some historical incident. We here give a translation of some of the most striking of these surnames: "Six-fingered,"¶ "Half-mustache" (from small-pox), "Shovel-nosed," "Spirit-jug," "Catch no jackals," "Son of golden head" (red-haired), "Son of the nightingale," "Never smile," "Laughter," "Come and go" (busybody), "Son of a fox," "Son of a cat," "Wolf" (sheep-stealer), "Son of thunder,"** "Son of the devil."†† The custom of making a surname by prefixing the word "son" to some other indication, usually of some quality, is now found in the Arabic, Persian, and Turkish dialects, but has never existed in the Greek. It occurs, however, in the Hebrew Scriptures, as Ben-jamin (son of the right hand), and in the older dialects of the New Testament, coming from the Syriac, as Barnabas (son of consolation).‡‡ The Arabic sometimes substitutes the word "father," as "Aboo dukn" (father of a great beard).

We find in the Greek of the New Testament another point of resemblance between the old Bible names and those of the modern Asiatics; in the genealogy of our Saviour,§§ as well as elsewhere, the name of the father is in the possessive case, with the word *son* in italics, indicating that it does not exist in the original. So, likewise, the Armenians make a patronymic by the use of the possessive case, omitting the word son, thus: Sarkis Minasian—literally, Sarkis of Minas—which signifies the son of Minas.

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* Gen. xiv., 13. † Esth. vi., 10. ‡ Acts ii., 7.
§ Acts xix., 24. ‖ Acts ix., 43. ¶ 2 Sam. xxi., 20.
** Mark iii., 17. †† 1 Sam. xxv., 17. ‡‡ Acts iv., 36.
§§ Matt. i.; Luke iii.

We need not remind the reader of the prevalence throughout Europe of the custom of making patronymics of similar construction. Such are the well-known names of O'Connell, McDonald, Thomson, Ericsson, Mendelssohn, Paskevich, Ivanhoff, Poniatowski, etc. It is remarkable that this system did not, as in Europe, lead to the adoption of family names among the Hebrews and the Arabs, who, unlike other Orientals, have always been careful to preserve the purity of the pedigree.

We must not, however, omit to say, that in the use of either patronymics or other distinguishing names, Orientals reverse, as usual, the order adopted by Occidentals. Thus, instead of saying Kevork Bedrosian, or George Peterson, they say Bedrosian Kevork, or Peterson George; so, likewise, Kaïserly Ahmed, the Cæsarean Ahmed; Bakkal Stepan, Grocer Stepan. The Arabs, however, follow the mode of Europe. In the East titles *follow* a man's name, instead of preceding it as with us. We say, General Sherman, President Grant, Queen Victoria; they say, Abdool-Aziz Khan, Eumer Pasha, Ali Effendi, Osman Agha, etc.

Another style of surname is peculiar to the Arabs, and seems to have existed among them from time immemorial. It consists in naming the father after the son, with the prefix Aboo, or father. Singularly enough, his own name is often dropped, and even wholly forgotten. A friend of ours after his marriage bore the name of Aboo Beshara, or the "Father of Glad-tidings," though he had no son. But one being born to him in more advanced age, the boy was named Beshara, and, strange to say, the father figured in important documents under no other name than Aboo Beshara; nor would it have been respectful to call him aught else. One of the earliest caliphs goes by the name of Aboo Bekr, which signifies the "Father of the maiden," a title given him in a similar manner to that mentioned above, on account of his being the father of Ayeshah, Mohammed's favorite wife.* Women are now distinguished, as in Bible times, by the name of their father or husband. So Milcah is called both the daughter of Haran and Nahor's wife,† and, in like manner, we read of Michal as Saul's

* There may be a reference to this practice in Prov. xxx., 4.

† Gen. xi., 29.

daughter and David's wife.* She also takes the name of her eldest son, with the word "Um" prefixed, meaning *mother*; as Um Beshara, the wife of our friend Aboo Beshara, above mentioned. Similarly we find in the Old Testament Zeruiah called Joab's mother;† and in the New, the mother of Jesus,‡ the mother of John,§ etc. This custom is explained in part by the existence of polygamy, which rendered the lot of a widow who had borne no son to her lord more deplorable than under any other system. We shall more fully explain this point elsewhere, but the reader may, meanwhile, profitably peruse the history of Jacob and his wives.‖

Let us now turn to proper names. Those of men are frequently an expression of the feeling of the parents on the birth of their son. We have mentioned the Arabic name of Beshara (Glad-tidings); and one of a similar signification is common among Armenians, and exists in all the languages of the East. So there are names expressive of thankfulness to God for deliverance: Ahmed and Hamood (Arabic) are derivatives of Hamed (praise); and many other names occurring in all the languages of the East may be translated "Thanks to God," "God sent," "God's gift," etc. This is very common in the Old Testament, as Simeon (hearing, or God hath heard).

Many names are formed of one of the names of the Deity; as, Abdullah, Abdul-Aziz (servant of God, servant of the Holy One, etc.). So, among the Jews, Elijah (my God is Jehovah), Elisha (God delivers). This custom also prevailed among the Phœnicians, the name of their god Baal appearing in some of the most celebrated men of Carthage, a colony of Tyre; as, Hanni-*bal*, Asdru-*bal*, etc. It also occurs in such names as Jeze*bel*, Bel-shazzar, etc.; and Ben-hadad derived his name from his god, Hadad. In Europe the Germans still use similar names; as, Gottlieb and Godfried, etc. The common practice consists, however, in giving a child one of the many names which have become stereotyped in the language, and whose usual recommendation lies, not so much in its real meaning, as in the fact that it is borne by some relative.¶ Still, it should be borne in mind that the great majority of these

* 1 Sam. xviii., 20; xxv., 44. † 2 Sam. xvii., 25. ‡ John ii., 1.
§ Acts xii., 12. ‖ Gen. xxix.; xxx.
¶ Luke i., 59–61.

names are not, as with us, of foreign origin, and that they still continue to express the idea originally represented by them.

The names given by parents to their daughters also express their feelings toward them, which differ considerably from those they entertain toward their sons; for, while the latter are looked upon as the future stay of their advanced years, their most sanguine hope respecting their daughters is that they may become advantageously married. The names of the latter, therefore, are expressive of those personal charms which will be most likely to secure to them a happy settlement in married life. They bear the names of many of their favorite flowers, the rose, the jasmine, the carnation, the lily, the violet, sweet basil, etc., or simply the word flower or blossom. Sometimes they appropriate the names of the most brilliant stars, as Venus, Mercury; as Esther, which means *a star* (French, Estelle); or they are called Light, Dawn, Twilight, Moonlight. Yet boys are named Moon, and girls Sun—a custom which may have arisen from an opposition to the ancient idolatry, which considered the sun to be the emblem of the supreme male deity, called Baal, or Jupiter; and the moon as that of Ashteroth, or Venus. The names of favorite trees, distinguished for their beauty, grace, or fruitfulness, are also bestowed upon daughters, such as the pomegranate, the almond, the date-palm.* They are called after the precious metals and gems; as, Gold, Diamond, Emerald, Pearl, Brilliant, or simply Gem. We also meet with the names Sugar-lip, Princess,† Milchah (queen); so, likewise, boys are called Prince, Ruler, King (Melech). The names of fleet and graceful animals are also appropriated, as the gazelle—a fit name for an Arab girl of Engedi, which very appropriately signifies "the spring or fountain of the wild goat." Among the Circassians a boy is sometimes called "Look of a Lion," and a girl "Speed of a Deer."‡ Nor are birds omitted in their list of names, for the nightingale is often commemorated in their families; so also the dove, the sparrow, etc. In addition to the above, mental and moral qualities often furnish names, which may prove, unfortunately, to have been most inappropriately bestowed; for Aziz (holy one) may be

* 2 Sam. xiv., 27.

† Heb. of Sarah, Gen. xvii., 15.

‡ Spencer, vol. ii., p. 190.

the name of a man notoriously the contrary, and "Well-spoken" that of an incorrigible scold.

It is worthy of notice that, as in New Testament times, so now, people's names are often translated from one language into another. Peter was the apostle's Greek name; he was called Cephas, in Syriac. The same is true of Paul and Saul. So, likewise, now, a man is called *Allah-verdy* in Turkish, and *Asdvadzadoor* in Armenian, both signifying *God-given.*

In personal appearance the inhabitants of what are usually denominated Bible lands, probably offer a greater variety than those of any other part of the globe. The people of Egypt, whether pure Copts, or partly of Arab origin, as well as those of the Arab race, both in Africa and Asia, are of medium stature, and not inclined to corpulency. They all have straight black hair, and are easily distinguished from negroes, who have been introduced as slaves among them, by the greater regularity of their features and their lighter skin. As we go north, however, the complexion grows fairer. There is a marked difference in color between the inhabitants of Egypt and of Palestine;* but the Arabs of the desert are browned by constant exposure to the sun. When we reach the mountainous regions, we meet with races tall and muscular. The Circassians, who are commonly regarded as offering the finest specimens of physical development, occupy the northern point of Western Asia, and have light brown hair and gray eyes. They are tall, erect, and finely formed, with clear complexions, which, however, lack color. The Armenians of the mountain ranges, both in the neighborhood of Ararat and of Sis in Cilicia, the later seat of their empire, are often above six feet in height, powerful, and noted for their dauntless and independent spirit. The Lesghians are well formed, sinewy, and powerful; but they have usually marked and prominent features, particularly the women. The Georgians and Armenians are thought finer than the Circassians, on account of their black hair and eyes, and often clear complexion. The Koords, both of Koordistan and of other mountainous regions of Asia Minor, are tall and muscular, but thin and gaunt, with prominent features and a sharp, restless eye. They are inveterate robbers, and even their women

* Cant. i., 5.

not unfrequently engage in the nefarious calling. Light hair and blue eyes are mostly confined to the Greeks. As fine specimens of the human form or of muscular development can be seen in Western Asia, particularly in Asia Minor, as in any part of the world. The Smyrna porters, who all belong to the city of Konieh, the ancient Iconium, are celebrated for their great strength; and the *pekhliwans*, or professional wrestlers, are often possessed of surprising muscular power. Nor do these people yield the palm to any other in point of longevity, to which their generally regular and abstemious habits doubtless greatly contribute. Men, as well as women, are often met with who are eighty and ninety years of age; and we have been able to authenticate cases in which the age of one hundred and four, and of one hundred and twenty-five, had been attained.

It must, however, be observed that the inhabitants of the rural districts generally fail to present in the most favorable light the physical peculiarities and advantages they may possess. This is owing to the life of exposure they lead, and to the extreme rapacity of the government to which their comparatively isolated position continually exposes them, keeping them in a condition of destitution and want. But in the cities commercial and industrial enterprise often brings prosperity, and even wealth; so that the condition of the inhabitants is, on the average, indicative of far more comfort and ease than that of the rural districts. In the cities, too, reside the officials of the government, and all the men who enrich themselves by the plunder of the poor. An abundant and wholesome diet, the appliances of the bath, and moderate exercise, combine, with the outdoor life of Orientals, to develop the physical frame, while the taste is cultivated and the manners polished by social intercourse. Looking at the different races of Western Asia as thus polished by the atmosphere of the cities, we may observe in general that among the men the greatest regularity of feature is presented by the Circassian and the Greek, when the latter is of pure origin. It is different, however, with the fairer sex. The Armenian ladies of Constantinople are considered by some to surpass even the Circassians in personal attractions, while in Smyrna it is the Greek ladies who bear away the palm. The Georgian slaves are said to be more highly prized by the Persians and Turks than the Circassians,

but they are difficult to obtain since the conquest of Georgia by the Russians. The Syrian ladies of Aleppo and Damascus are celebrated for their fine features, clearness of complexion, and soft dark eyes and hair; and this is said to be equally true of the Jewish ladies of the same localities. It may here be remarked that the Jews of Turkey — mostly of Spanish origin, called the Hassidim — are generally of a delicate and effeminate appearance, supposed to be occasioned by the very early marriages of both sexes. The gypsies resemble their race everywhere.

The land of Palestine and Syria seems to be one of the most favorable regions for the completest development of the physical and mental powers of the human race. The climate is neither too warm, as in Egypt and Arabia, nor too cold, as in the highlands of Asia Minor, to allow the inhabitants to live, for the most part, out-of-doors during all seasons of the year, and bodily exercise and labor is always invigorating. It hardly needs be added that diseases of the lungs are almost unknown. These causes, added to the flowing garments they wear, may account for their gracefulness of form and gesture. We were in Turkey at the time that the costume of the military was exchanged by Sultan Mahmood for a close imitation of the European dress, and we well remember how every body exclaimed at the want of symmetry and grace which the change seemed to reveal. To mention but one particular: the habit Orientals have of squatting upon the ground, as well as their mode of riding (for many of them are constantly in the saddle), necessarily affects the straightness of the lower limbs and the back, defects which are totally hidden by the Oriental costume, but fully revealed by the European.

Women reach their maturity at a much earlier age than in Europe. They are at the height of their bloom and beauty at fifteen or sixteen, but have lost their freshness and seem old at thirty. This is doubtless attributable to their early marriages. In Egypt girls are often married at eleven years of age, and even earlier, and Mohammedan law recognizes the contracting of marriage before the age of puberty is reached.* As we go north, the age at which they marry increases, though occasion-

* Lane. vol. i., p. 201.

ally we meet with an old man espoused to a very young girl, especially among the Turks. As the women advance in years they are inclined to corpulency, but this is not considered a blemish, nor was it so regarded of old, for the name of Rebecca signifies "the fat" or "the plump" one. The women of Western Asia are probably as greatly favored, as to physical attractions and natural graces, as those of any other land, and in girlhood they are models of beauty in body and limbs.* No corset, as in more civilized lands, compresses the chest, or impedes the healthy development of the lungs and breast; but they early fade under the pressure of maternal duties, and the breast, from which the child is often not weaned until the third and sometimes the fourth year, early loses its natural fullness, and lies loose and flat, being but partially covered by the flowing garment always open at the bosom. This is often the case, even before the face has lost any of its charms.

Among women of the lower orders, and all who are engaged in rural occupations, there is often a remarkable development of physical strength. The habit of carrying a jar of water and other considerable weights upon the head from the age of girlhood gradually imparts great strength to the neck and back, and renders the form and gait both erect and firm. A friend has assured us that he has repeatedly seen Egyptian women at Alexandria carry half the body of an ox upon their heads with apparent ease, not touching the burden with either hand.

In the foregoing statements no reference has been made to the Turks, a race that came into Western Asia only during the Middle Ages. A small part of these invaders still retain their original physical peculiarities. These are mostly confined to the Crimea, and go by the name of Tartars; and their hereditary chiefs are so nearly related to the Sultan of Turkey that, should the latter die without issue, the nearest of kin would, by general consent, be the Khan of the Crimean Tartars. These Tartars are a swarthy race, and their type is occasionally met with among the Turks. But the latter have been so mixed with other races by proselytism, and still more by means of slavery, that they have lost their original characteristics, and now present every variety of type. The influence of amalgamation

* Lane, vol. i., p. 44.

upon their character has been extremely unfavorable, for they have now become notorious chiefly for their gross and debasing vices, seldom relieved by any redeeming qualities. Their rule has been the blight and the ruin of the fair lands upon which, locust-like, they have alighted, not to cultivate and adorn them, but to devour and to destroy what they could not consume lest others should enjoy it!

It is the general impression that the costumes of Orientals are not subject to the changes caused in Europe by inexorable fashion. This is true, however, only in a relative sense. There can be no doubt that fashions do exist in the East, and have from time immemorial exercised as despotic a sway there as anywhere else. The Persians in the East and the Turks in the West have been ever its most willing devotees. In the matter of hair-dressing, for instance, we have collected among the ruins of Smyrna a number of beautiful and highly-polished mouldings in terra cotta, many of which consist of the heads or busts of both men and women; and among about three hundred specimens of female beauty, there are scarcely two whose coiffure is similar, while the style of some of them is truly extraordinary. It is equally clear that the Turks have been greatly affected by the changes of fashion. The sultan's state library at Seraglio Point, which was burned a few years ago, contained a collection of miniature portraits of the entire Osmanli dynasty, and though there was throughout a general similarity of costume, yet a gradual and constant change could be clearly traced. We find a further illustration of the correctness of this statement in the Turkish cemeteries, where the tombs of the men are distinguished from those of the other sex by a fac-simile in carved marble of the head-dress they wore when living. The vast cemeteries of Scutari, on the Asiatic side of Constantinople, thus present a remarkable collection of the turbans and other head-gear worn by the Osmanlis of every rank and station during the last four centuries.

Besides these changes of fashion, however, which, after all, affect only certain minor details, there is another cause producing diversity of dress which should not be overlooked. Sumptuary laws that regulate the color, form, and material of the garments worn by different classes and ranks of society, have ever prevailed in these countries. Not that such laws are

written or promulgated, but, as we shall show further on, there has always been in every country of the Levant a ruling race or class arrogating to itself many privileges and enjoyments denied to others, among which are reckoned the liberty of wearing richer and more costly garments and gayer colors. But an important object of those distinctions is to enable one to detect at a single glance the class and rank of every man, woman, and child he may meet. Hence the diversity of dress is often striking in color, and even in form. There are also provincial differences, but these are so numerous, and generally so unimportant, that we shall only occasionally refer to them. Similar distinctions, whether national or provincial, existed in ancient times, as may be clearly seen upon Egyptian and Assyrian monuments. It was doubtless in accordance with this custom that Moses appointed for the Hebrews a national distinction in dress, consisting of "a blue fringe upon the edge of the four quarters of their vesture."* This fringe is probably represented on the Assyrian sculpture at page 356. It seems to us highly probable that even the several tribes of Israel and of Judah wore some distinctive garment, differing in color or otherwise from that worn by the rest, whereby they could easily distinguish one another, especially when engaged in warfare, just as the uniform of our soldiers indicates their nationality, even at a great distance; nor do we consider this supposition disproved by the Shibboleth test applied to the Ephraimites by the Gileadites,† for they had doubtless so far altered their dress as to escape detection from that source.

Still, there is always a certain uniformity in dress among the common people of Western Asia, which may be accounted for in various ways. In spite of unbounded hospitality, intercourse, except for purely business purposes, is limited to one's own nationality and religious faith, while bigotry, fanaticism, and pride of race all conspire to maintain unimpaired every outward distinction. The cloth worn by the people is manufactured by their wives and daughters, dyed and fashioned into garments at home. Foreign manufactures of every description have, until a very recent date, been unknown. The taste of Orientals for splendor of attire has led all who can afford it

* Numb. xv., 38, 39; Deut. xxii., 12.

† Judg. xii., 5, 6.

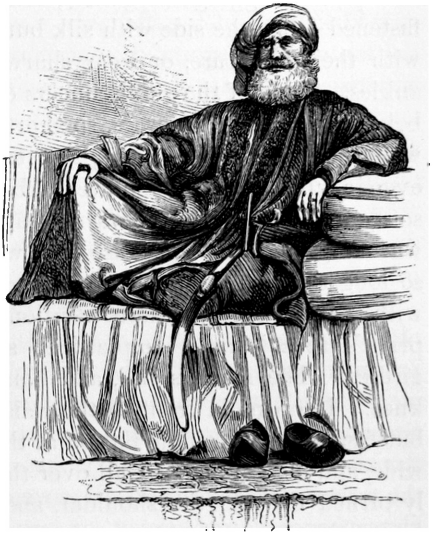
to provide themselves with costly and showy garments, worn only on special occasions, and these, being handed down from one generation to another, have also contributed to preserve the fashions and styles unaltered. We might cite in proof the peculiar costumes worn by the inhabitants of several islands of the Grecian Archipelago, particularly Hydra, Tinos, and Chios, as well as the stupendous turban of the Koords, the striped kefiyeh of the Bedawy, the boornoos of the Algerine, the tantoor, or horn, of Mount Lebanon, etc. These local peculiarities illustrate the tenacity with which the people of this land cling to their ancient customs. But it is more especially among the women that this tenacity is observable; for, while business sometimes calls their husbands far from home, where they are led from necessity or choice to adopt novelties in dress, *they* usually remain at home, and spend their whole lives in their native town.

These observations, however, apply equally to many parts of Europe, particularly to the Highlanders of Scotland, the peasantry of several districts of Holland, France, Switzerland, etc.* But a great change is now rapidly coming over the entire East. The government is on the side of innovations, and the brisk trade with Europe is fast obliterating what has stood the test of forty centuries. But we do not believe that Orientals can ever be made over, or lose their distinctive peculiarities. Their garments can never be completely Europeanized, and will return to the old forms the moment the present pressure is removed. The influence of the all-pervading Roman empire was ephemeral, though we can still distinctly perceive it even in the New Testament; and one of the causes of the remarkable success of Islam in its first propagation is doubtless to be found in the reaction of the Oriental mind against the forcible intrusion of Occidental ideas and customs. It is the old struggle between the East and the West which commenced

* We must except the Persians from this general rule, at least those of the upper and middle classes; for no other nation is equally fond of changing the fashion of their clothes, which has given them the name of Frenchmen of the East. Herodotus described them two thousand years ago just as they are to-day. "There is no nation," he says, "which so readily adopts foreign customs as the Persians. Thus they have taken the dress of the Medes, considering it superior to their own. As soon as they hear of any luxury, they instantly make it their own."—HERODOTUS, bk. i., chap. 135.

at the siege of Troy, was continued by Xerxes and Alexander, the Persians, and the Romans, then changed to a contest between religious creeds, still going on, and undecided as to the final result.

We have already described the dress of the desert Arab, which appears to have undergone the least change since the days of Abraham and Job. The dwellers in cities, possessing better materials and more perfect implements of manufacture, as well as stronger motives drawn from social life, are dressed in greater variety of material as well as of form; yet their garments are essentially the same in all parts of the country. To begin with the dress of the men: the drawers ("libas"), of white cotton stuff, are of the same form, though smaller than the trowsers ("sharwar"), which are worn over them. They are the "breeches" mentioned among the garments of the priests, in Exodus, being of linen, and "reaching from the loins to the thighs."* Both the drawers and trowsers are shaped like a bag broader than it is long, with an opening at each of the lower corners large enough to admit the feet. They are gathered around the waist by means of a long, narrow band, with the ends, in the case of the sharwar, embroidered in gay colors, which is passed through a broad hem, and tied in front. A large wooden tape-needle may sometimes be seen hanging from a peg in the wall, which is used whenever this band above-said needs replacing. The sharwar worn by the lower classes is generally of dark blue cotton, or coarse brown woolen stuff; while those in better



An Oriental Gentleman.

* Exod. xxviii., 42.

circumstances wear some light woolen material or broadcloth of a uniform color. The Nestorian mountaineers of Koordistan, and workmen of the adjoining plain, wear sharwars and foot-gear, which are perfectly reproduced, both as to pattern and form, on the Persepolitan sculptures. Some sharwars reach only down to the knee, others reach to the feet, and terminate in a pair of leggings or gaiters, often richly embroidered, and fastened down the side with silk buttons. But most people go with their legs bare, or wear sharwars reaching down to the ankles. Some of the mountaineers of Asia Minor, called "Zeibeks," wear white sharwars, so short that they reach only halfway down the thigh, leaving the rest of the limb entirely bare even in winter. It must, however, be remarked that many persons, especially during the warm weather, dispense with the sharwar altogether, in which case they wear the "kuftan," or robe, so long that it nearly touches the ground. This corresponds with the dress of the priests mentioned in Lev. xvi., 4; but the priest's "coat" was a simple linen shirt, "girded with a linen girdle." The shirt is full, and hangs loose down below the knee. It opens in front to the waist, and is without a collar, but fastens with a single button at the throat. The sleeves are wide, and long enough to fall over the hand; they are frequently turned up over the shoulder, and kept in place by tucking under the armpit, or by means of a string. This garment is worn over the drawers, but under the sharwars. It is white, and made of cotton, linen, or silk.

We have already described the shirt as almost the only garment worn by the desert Arabs of both sexes. The same is the case with the poor, and the fellahin, or cultivators of the soil, whether in Arabia, Palestine, or Egypt. The material is usually cotton, and the color dark blue, and it is bound around their bodies with a strap or thong of leather.

But this shirt, or tunic, as it may often more properly be called, is not unfrequently woven of camel's or goat's hair.* The shirt, however, is often omitted altogether, especially by the poor, and this is more frequently the case in warm weather, when the other garments of light and cool material suffice. Over the shirt, in cool weather, is often worn a vest, called a "sudri-

* 2 Kings i., 8; Matt. iii., 4.

yeh," of striped cotton or silk, or some warmer material, without sleeves, and buttoning up to the throat.

The next garment is the kuftan, a robe usually reaching to the ankles, whose sleeves are long enough to hang over and cover the hands. It has a narrow standing collar, fastening at the throat with two silk buttons,* and open all the way down in front—one side lapping over the other at the waist, where it is held by a single button. The kuftan is slit on each side from the bottom upward half-way to the knee, and so are the sleeves half-way to the elbow. These last, however, may be buttoned at the wrist when desirable.

This garment is usually of striped and figured cotton or silk, and often of more costly stuffs, according to the means of the wearer. One material in high favor is manufactured in Aleppo and Damascus, and is called "cloth of seven colors," the stripes being alternately of as many bright hues, which may suggest the seven colors of the rainbow. The coat of many colors given by Jacob to Joseph, his favorite son, was probably of a similar fabric.† The kuftan is lined with some light material, a circumstance to which Josephus alludes in relating the detection of a letter intrusted to a messenger, and hidden between the cloth and the lining: the man had taken the further precaution to wear two kuftans, one over the other, as is frequently done in cold weather.‡ As we have already stated, this garment only laps over at the waist, lying loosely upon the bosom; on the inside, both right and left, is a pocket opening perpendicularly, in which, as well as in the girdle, are carried a variety of articles, such as the handkerchief, the purse, etc. But as we have already seen (page 405), the kuftan, like the shirt of the Arab, after the girdle has been bound around his body, offers a spacious receptacle, or pocket. The kuftan continues to be the principal garment of the men, as it was in ancient times. It now constitutes, as of old, the robe of honor, bestowed by Eastern monarchs, or men in power, upon their inferiors as a mark of their favor.§ The first of the Biblical instances here referred to is an example of investiture of office, of which we shall speak in a succeeding chapter; but the last

* Job xxx., 18.

† Gen. xxxvii., 3.

‡ Josephus, "Antiquities," bk. xvii., chap. v., § 7.

§ Layard, vol. i., p. 66; Esth. viii., 15; Dan. v., 29.

was purely honorific, and included the outer coat as well as the kuftan.

The most ancient representations of the human form found in Egypt, Assyria, and Asia Minor contain abundant evidence that no material change has taken place in the dress of the people. We can clearly distinguish upon those stone carvings the poorer people, whose chief garment was the shirt we have described, and the wealthier class, who wore the kuftan, or robe. So, likewise, if we turn to the Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testaments, we not only find passages containing clear allusions to the Oriental robe, but other passages which can not be understood without the knowledge of this garment. We have already alluded to Joseph's coat, or "robe of many colors." When the Ark of the Lord was brought to Jerusalem,* David is described as wearing both an ephod, or a shirt of linen, and a robe of like material. It is evident that when the king danced before the Ark he had laid aside the latter, and wore only his ephod and drawers.† Michal, his wife, looked through a window, and, seeing what she considered his undignified dress and demeanor, despised him in her heart, and reproached him in language which seems very natural to an Oriental ear.‡ The difficulty of identifying the garments mentioned in the Scriptures with those worn at the present day arises from the variety of names used in the former—a circumstance, however, equally true of the latter, since what is essentially the same garment, though we have given it but one name, is differently designated in different provinces and towns, and even among different classes of people. We must, therefore, make large use of the context, and not trust to fancied etymologies, which are no more reliable in this case than when applied to the garments we ourselves wear.

The reader will find reference to the kuftan in the following passages: it is called a robe in 1 Sam. xviii., 4; xxiv., 4; Job i., 20; xxix., 14; Isa. xxii., 21; lxi., 10; Jonah iii., 6; Mic. ii., 8; Matt. xxvii., 28; χίτων (coat), Matt. v., 40; Mark vi., 9; Luke iii., 11; vi., 29; xx., 46; John xix., 2, 23. It is also sometimes translated "garment," as in Josh. vii., 21; Ezra ix., 3; Matt. xxii., 11; and the "apparel," Esth. viii., 15. The rend-

* 2 Sam. vi., 12–14; 1 Chron. xv., 25–27. † Lev. vi., 10. ‡ 2 Sam. vi., 20.

ing of the garment consists in ripping open the seams on each side of the kuftan, in front, where the gored pieces are sewed on to enable the edges to overlap each other, so that, there being no real tearing, the damages can easily be repaired by a few stitches.* The "entary," or woman's garment, corresponding to the kuftan of the men, is rent in the same manner as a sign of mourning.† It is now the custom for the priest in charge of the obsequies at a funeral to go around to the chief mourners and rip open the front seam of each one's kuftan for him three or four inches down from the waist, and so as not to injure the garment.‡ The girdle in its simplest form is a leathern thong, such as was worn by the prophet Elijah and John the Baptist in the desert over a shirt of camel's hair, and such as is still in general use among the Bedawy Arabs, as well as among the Circassians in the region of Mount Caucasus. The poor fellahin, or settled Arabs, prefer a strip of cloth called "kamar," red being the favorite color;§ but those who can afford to wear the kuftan bind around it a girdle ("hezâm"), consisting of a long strip of muslin, or a shawl, whose material and value depend upon the means of the wearer. This part of the dress is very conspicuous, and is often more costly than all the rest; shawls of Cashmere and Lahore are not unfrequently worn by the wealthy. The proper size is eight yards in length and one in width;‖ but there are parts of the country where a much longer girdle is used: those of the Zeibeks of Asia Minor, for instance, are wound around their bodies from the armpits to below the hips.

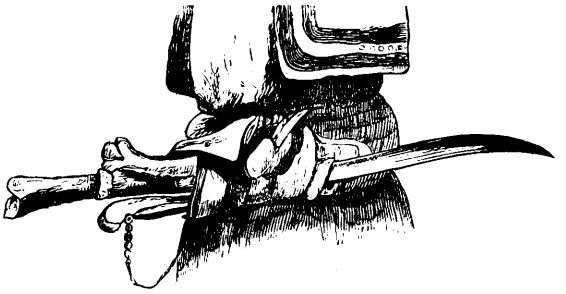
The girdle is frequently alluded to in the Scriptures, and these references indicate that it was used in the same manner as at present: Exod. xxviii., 4; Lev. viii., 7; 1 Sam. xviii., 4; Ezek. xxiii., 15. It was often of costly material.¶

Before engaging in a race or a fight, the girdle is tightened round the waist, and its end is carefully made fast; at the same time the sharwar is drawn up tight, and the surplus fastened behind with the girdle; or the kuftan is raised similarly. The loins are thus strengthened for the conflict by the girdle, which prevents the garments from slipping down and impeding the

* 2 Sam. xv., 32; Ezra ix., 5; Job i., 20 (margin, "robe"); ii., 12.
† 2 Sam. xiii., 19.
‡ "Hadji Baba," vol. iii., chap. 1.
§ Lane, vol. i., p. 40.
‖ Morier, vol. i., p. 245.
¶ 2 Sam. xviii., 11; Prov. xxxi., 24; Rev. i., 13; xv., 6.

movements. Hence youths old enough to bind on their own girdles are called fighting men.* So, likewise, the need of assistance in binding on the girdle is indicative of weakness, and particularly of old age.†

The manner in which weapons are set in and bound to the



Weapons carried in the Girdle. (Deut. i., 41.)

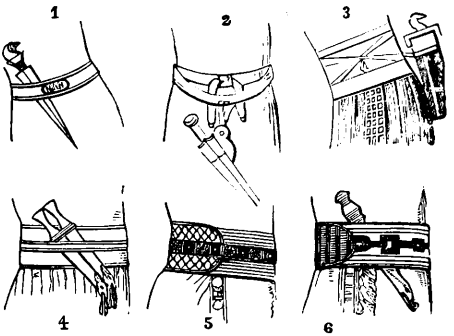
girdle, so as not to impede the movements in running, fighting, or on a long march, may be seen in the engraving annexed.‡ There is among the Persepolitan sculptures a representation which proves with peculiar clearness the identity of the ancient and modern girdle.

The long kuftan, or robe, is not often worn with sharwars; a shorter garment, otherwise identical, is usually substituted, over which the sharwar is drawn, and the girdle is placed around over both. This mode of dress is particularly convenient on horseback as well as in warfare. A broad belt of red morocco is buckled over the girdle, in which are inserted a brace of pistols, and a knife three feet long, peculiarly Oriental in the form of its blade and handle, and called a "yatagan." Many carry merely a dagger ("khancher") in their girdles, a privilege denied to Christians and Jews, who hold the same relation to Muslims that the conquered nations did to the Romans. The khancher is often handsomely jeweled, and its blade is sharp only on one side. The Circassian never parts with his two-edged dagger; it corresponds with the two-edged sword of Ehud,§ for it is about a cubit in length, including its ivory handle; but it is worn

* 2 Kings iii., 21; margin rendering, "that could gird themselves with a girdle." See also Job xii., 18, 21; xxxviii., 3; Psa. xviii., 32; Isa. v., 27; viii., 9; xxii., 21; xxiii., 10.

† John xxi., 18. ‡ Deut. i., 41; Judg. xviii., 11. § Judg. iii., 16.

conspicuously in front, suspended from the leathern belt. Ehud was obliged to conceal his weapon by a prohibition to the Hebrews to carry arms similar to that laid upon Christians by their Muslim conquerors. The girdle is also used as a receptacle for a variety of articles; a handkerchief is often kept in it, and the tobacco-bag and the watch also have their regular place there. The merchant and the scribe often carry, thrust into their girdles, their inkstand and case for pens, described on page 390. In the house, and when engaged in work, the shirt, drawers, robe, and girdle are usually worn without any additional garments, especially during the summer; but when the weather is cool, or when in the street, or entertaining guests, an additional garment is worn, called the "jibbeh," or "benish." It is a loose coat, usually of broadcloth, and of any uniform color, extending to the feet, with a narrow collar, and sleeves whose length and fullness depend upon the fashion and the class to which the wearer belongs. It is always open in front, for it has no buttons. The garment appears to be of great antiquity, and is evidently referred to in Gen. xxxix., 12–15; 1 Sam. xviii., 4; 2 Kings ix., 13; Esth. viii., 15; Mic. ii., 8; Matt. xxi., 8; Mark xiii., 16; Luke vi., 29; xix., 35; xxii., 36; John xiii., 4; Acts xii., 8; xxii., 20.



Ancient Girdles: 1, 3, Egyptian; 2, Persepolitan; 4, 5, 6, Assyrian.

The jibbeh, however, is not worn by all. Its place is often taken by a jacket with short sleeves never reaching lower than the girdle. This jacket is often worn under the jibbeh; but it is used by all who wear the sharwars over the short kuftan. These jackets are often of a bright color, are richly embroidered, and have long sleeves slit open from the shoulder to the wrist, which may be closed at pleasure with buttons, or allowed to hang straight down from the shoulder.

Furs are much worn by Orientals in cold weather. Many simply line with them the body of the jacket, which is worn

either with or without the jibbeh; sometimes the jibbeh itself has a fur lining throughout, excepting the sleeves, in which case it is called by Europeans a pelisse. Some of these pelisses are not only lined with expensive furs, but are also elaborately embroidered with gold, and, like the kuftan in the southern parts of the country, are bestowed in the northern regions by the sovereign as a mark of royal favor. The most common fur is that of the fox, which abounds in all parts of the country. There are cheaper furs worn by the poor; that of the wolf is used only by sailors. The wealthy, particularly the ladies, prefer the martin and the sable.

The cloak of Western Asia is more varied in form and material than any other garment. The "mashlak" is universally worn south of Mount Taurus. It is a very loose garment, with sleeves so ample as to hide the arms and hands when they hang down, made of a firm, coarse woolen texture woven in broad stripes, dark brown and white. This garment appears to be of great antiquity, being the cloak in common use in all parts of Arabia and the Desert, where it not unfrequently constitutes the only covering of the wearer both by day and by night. It is probably alluded to in the following passages: Exod. xxii., 26, 27; Judg. iv., 18; 1 Sam. xv., 27; xxviii., 14; 1 Kings xix., 13, 19; 2 Kings ii., 8, 13; 2 Tim. iv., 13. There are varieties of this cloak, however, some of which may have been, or still are, used in the same regions of country as the mashlak,* while others are found only in neighboring districts. The burnoos of the Moors and others of the Barbary States has a hood attached, and this is the case with garments of various lengths, made of a thick woolen stuff, impervious to rain, and goes by the name of "aba." The fisherman's coat is of this nature.† It has sleeves, but reaches hardly to the knees, and is often bound around the waist with a handkerchief or a leathern strap, and is worn by many besides fisher-

* The mashlak in Syria and Palestine is usually woven in two pieces, which are sewed together in a single seam, running down the back; a few, however, are made in a single piece; they are the dearest, as they have to be wrought on a larger loom. It has been suggested that the seamless coat of our Lord, spoken of in John xix., 23, for which the soldiers cast lots, was a cloak or mashlak (Clarke, "Travels," chap. xiii., p. 257). The word χιτών usually means the garment worn next to the skin; it has, however, also been used to indicate the outer vesture (Josephus, "Antiquities," bk. iii., chap. vii., § 4).

† John xxi., 7.

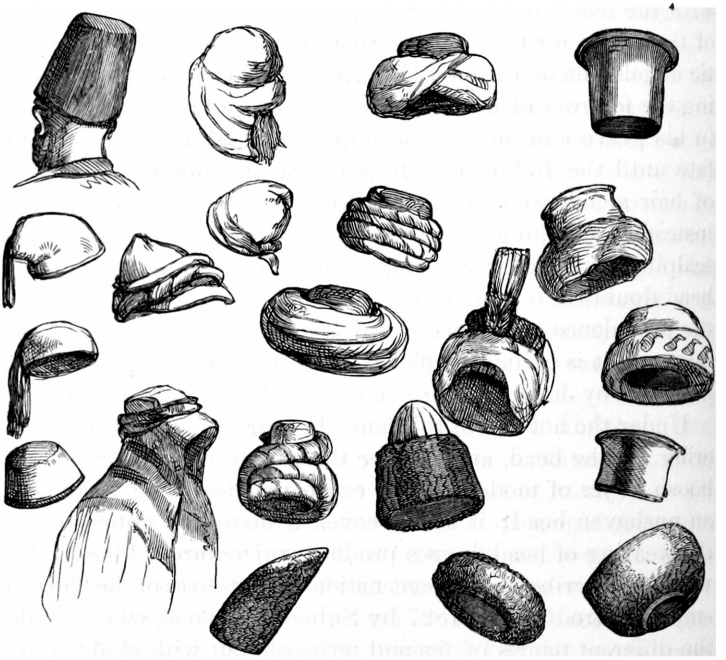
men. In the northern parts, the shepherds and the camel-drivers wear a large cloak of white felt, without hood or sleeves. It is, however, sometimes used as a hood, and is set up over the head like a tent. A long piece of cloth somewhat in the shape of a shawl, and of a uniform dull color, is sometimes used instead of a hood, the ends meeting in front, and one of them being thrown over the shoulder.

The practice of shaving the head is almost universal, except with the Arabs of the Desert. Muslims, however, in accordance with the tenets of their religion, leave a single lock on the top of the head; for they believe that after their burial two gigantic angels, the one named Munkir and the other Guanakir, seizing the follower of Islam by this lock, cause him to kneel down in his grave and answer the inquiries which are to decide his fate until the Judgment. It is curious to find the same lock of hair among the savages of North America, who, however, instead of attaching to it any religious idea, reserve it for the scalping-knife of their enemies. This practice of shaving the head doubtless originated in Egypt, and is there maintained by the prevalence of cutaneous diseases and the abundance of vermin, and it is certainly efficacious as far as it goes; hence it is practiced by Jews and Christians as well as by Muslims.*

Under the hot sun of this land the hair is an insufficient covering for the head, and neither the turban nor the simple tarboosh, or *fez* of modern times, can conveniently be worn upon an unshaven head; it is, moreover, a matter of notoriety that the wearing of head-dresses produces premature baldness. We will not describe the present national head-dress of the Turkish empire, introduced in 1827 by Sultan Mahmood, which, under the different names of fez and tarboosh, but with slight differences of form, was designed to supplant the ancient graceful head-dress of the East with a distant imitation of the European hat. The real and immemorial head-dress of the East is the turban. This consists, first, of a small close-fitting cap of white cotton cloth, called "arakiyeh," worn day and night, but often changed; next to this is worn a cap, varying in size and weight, of red, white, or black felt, with or without a blue silk tassel,

* This practice anciently existed among several nations; for Jeremiah (ix., 26, margin) specifies as thus shaving the hair, with the exception of a central curl, the Egyptians, Jews, Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites.

and sometimes of wadded cloth; around this is wound the turban, usually consisting of muslin, silk, or a valuable shawl, of a variety of form, size, or arrangement, according to the rank or condition of the wearer. Certain colors can be worn only by the ruling, or Muslim, race. The turban of men of the law is of white muslin; the green is appropriated exclusively to the descendants of the Prophet, called sherifs, even in the female line. This custom dates only from the fourteenth century, and is based on the fact that Mohammed was usually



Modern Oriental Head-dresses.

dressed in green, and that it was the color of the sacred standard. Bright colors can be worn either in the dress or the turban by the Muslims alone, while the "rayahs," or subject races, are permitted the use only of dark or dull colors. The shape of the turban, especially in the cities and among the higher class, has been subject to frequent changes. The simplest forms have probably always remained the same. We have seen a very ancient helmet, which was evidently intended to be worn over the turban, and an illustration is given of it farther on.

The Mamlooks of Egypt formerly wore a turban of great size; it consisted of seventy-five yards of the finest muslin, so curiously and nicely folded and intertwined, that they formed a kind of horn, the dimensions of which, varying according to the rank and dignity of every individual, was from two to ten ells.* This fact might serve as an illustration of the text of Scripture, "Lift not up the horn."† It must, however, be acknowledged that these passages can be explained without supposing them to contain allusion to any thing worn by men upon the head.‡

By far the most imposing turban worn in our day is that of the chiefs of the Koordish mountaineers. A tall, conical cap is set upon the head, and around it is worn a long shawl, in such a manner that it assumes the shape of a flat shield about four feet in diameter; about this are twisted and tied innumerable gay handkerchiefs—the most acceptable gift that can be offered to a Koordish chieftain. As may be well conceived, such a stupendous head-dress is quite heavy; it has, indeed, to be balanced by means of a handkerchief, which passes across the forehead and is tied to the hind part of the turban. It is a great protection to the head in warfare, which may be said of the turban generally.§

It must not be supposed that the turban has at any time been the exclusive head-dress of the nations that have occupied the western portions of Asia. The carvings upon the stones of Shehel Minar, and similar rock drawings found in Mesopotamia, Armenia, and Syria, prove that the head-dresses of the Persians, and of their predecessors, the Assyrians, were essentially the same as at the present day. The Phrygian caps represented on the bass-reliefs of Boghaz Keuy, in Central Asia Minor, differ from those of modern Persia only in being more upright, and the Circassians of our day wear caps of the same material, precisely similar to those of the ancient Ninevites. Indeed, the lamb-skin cap, in some form, is worn by all the Northern tribes in place of the turban, and particularly by the Georgians, Mingrelians, Lesghies, Armenians, and even by the Cossacks, the Tartars, and the Bulgarians of south-eastern Europe.

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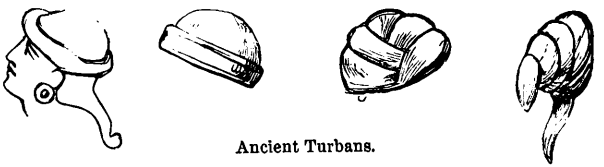
* Churchill, vol. ii., p. 332.

† Psa. lxxv., 4, 10; cxii., 9; cxlviii., 14.

‡ 1 Kings xxii., 11; Micah iv., 13.

§ Perkins, p. 191; Layard, vol. i., p. 151.

The Osmanli empire, far more than its predecessors at Bagdad, Damascus, and Cairo, has ever been fond of the outward show produced by a varied garb in its officers and subjects; and, until lately, there was in Turkey a great diversity of head-dress, properly belonging neither to the class of the lamb-skin cap nor to that of the turban, but designated by the general name of "ka-ook" and "kalpak," which would already have perished from the memory of man, but for the curious collections of old costumes in the Imperial Museum at the At-Meïdan, in Constantinople. It is highly probable that distinctive costumes were worn by the different officers of state at the courts of the Pharaohs and the kings of Jerusalem, Nineveh, and Babylon, though we have no means of ascertaining precisely what they were. It appears, however, from a passage in Herodotus, that even the Persians often wore the turban in his day; for he says of them that, on certain occasions, "they wear the turban encircled with a wreath, most commonly of myrtle."* Various forms of the turban are not unfrequently represented on ancient carvings.



Ancient Turbans.

The beard is held in high estimation throughout the East, and it is a shame for a man to have no hair upon his face, which is the case with eunuchs, who are generally despised.† The hair of the upper lip is always allowed to grow, but the chin and face are shaved by the younger men, and the beard is not worn in some districts until the age of forty.‡ In the cities it is trimmed and thinned about the throat by the barber. The Jews strictly obey the requirement of their law to allow the beard its natural growth,§ and they carry out the first part of the precept by leaving a lock of hair before each ear, though they shave the rest of the head. It was not always so, however, for Mephibosheth left his beard untrimmed, as a sign

* Rawlinson, "Herodotus," vol. i., p. 218.
† Matt. xix., 12.
‡ Spencer, vol. ii., p. 107.
§ Lev. xix., 27.

of mourning,* as is now done by others than Jews. The beard is rarely dyed except among the Persians, who use both indigo and henna (see page 364). This was done by the ancient Assyrians.† The hair, when cut, is not preserved, as are shavings of the nails, both of hands and feet; some, indeed, drop the latter into some chink or crack in the floor, but others carefully deposit them in a little bag kept in the girdle, with the idea that, being a part of their bodies, these fragments must rise from the grave at the resurrection-day, and become identified with their new bodies. The beard is not only esteemed, but venerated, and men swear not only by their heads,‡ but by their beards.

It is a great reproach to shave off the beard after being grown. We once knew a highly respected Armenian priest of Nicomedia, Der Harootune by name, who refused to sign a declaration presented by his bishop which recognized the worst tenets of popery. He was, in consequence, taken to the principal church of the city, divested of his priestly garments, his beard shaved, and he was driven thence to prison amidst the hootings and peltings of the mob.§ The beard, and even the eyebrows, are sometimes shaven, in token of mourning;‖ but they are oftener "plucked off" on such occasions, as is also the hair of the head when not shaved.¶ This is frequently the case among the Persians, and was universal among the Greeks and Romans.** The practice of plucking off the hair of the head is very general among women in time of severe afflictions.††

The sandal, so generally worn by the ancients, is now mostly confined in Western Asia to the Arabs of the desert, with the exception of that form of it described on page 186. In the cities and large towns of Western Asia it has been replaced by the morocco shoe, terminating with a high point at the toes; but it is still in very general use in India, China, Japan, and some of the islands of the South-eastern Archipelago.‡‡ The accompanying plate shows the forms of shoes, boots, and clogs most in use at the present time in Western Asia and Egypt.

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* 2 Sam. xix., 24. † Layard, vol. ii., p. 254. ‡ Matt. v., 36.
§ 2 Sam. x., 1–5. ‖ "Arabian Nights," p. 46; Isa. xv., 2; Jer. xli., 5.
¶ Ezra ix., 3. ** Acts xviii., 18.
†† Josephus, "Antiquities," bk. xvi., chap. vii., § 5; Perkins, p. 341; Spencer, vol. ii., pp. 98, 350. ‡‡ Tavernier, part ii., chap. xxii., p. 197.

In warm weather, and among the poor, the shoe constitutes the sole covering of the foot. Both rich and poor, however, though they go about the house wearing their shoes, always leave them at the door of the room before they step upon a carpet or matting, or sit upon their feet on the divan.* This is done from motives of cleanliness, and must not be confounded with a similar practice at places considered as holy ground.†



Oriental Shoes, Boots, and Clogs. (Cant. vii., 1.)

The richer class wear either socks or stockings of cotton or wool, or a morocco "mest," which is a boot or sock of soft leather, with a sole of the same, and is worn inside of the shoe. Some men, however, instead of shoes, use slippers of the same form as those worn by the women; and this not only about the house, but in the street as well. One of the duties of a servant is to put away the shoes of his master when taken off, and to set them down before him when he wishes to step off the carpet. When a rich man rides through the street, he is accompanied by several servants on foot, one of whom carries his shoes.‡ Walking barefoot out-of-doors is a sign of poverty,§ and also a sign of mourning;‖ and as the ordinary sandal of Bible times was considered as an article of trifling value,¶ so now even a new pair of morocco shoes is worth but one or two shillings of English money, or from twenty-five to fifty cents. Yellow slippers and mests are worn by Muslims, while Christians and Jews can only wear dark purple or black. There is also a heavy, clumsy morocco boot, always red, like

* Luke vii., 38; John xiii., 5, 6.

† Exod. iii., 5; Josh. v., 15. I can not agree with Mr. Lane on this point, though I am sorry to differ from so high an authority. See Lane, "Modern Egyptians," Introduction, vol. i., p. 16.

‡ Morier, "Travels," vol. ii., p. 166; Matt. iii., 11. § Luke xv., 22.

‖ Morier, "Travels," vol. ii., p. 179; 2 Sam. xv., 30; Ezek. xxiv., 17.

¶ Amos ii., 6; viii., 6.

the shoe, with an iron heel, which is worn almost exclusively in riding.

There is by no means so marked a distinction between the costumes of women and that of men in the East as in the West, though this is fully compensated by the veil. The difference consists only of slight deviations in the form of the garments. We have, indeed, repeatedly seen women clad in clothes belonging to their husbands, and, among the nomads, have often been puzzled to distinguish the sex until it was betrayed by the smooth face or the long tresses. The shirt worn by the women is full and ample, like that worn by the men, but shorter, reaching only to the knees, and generally of a finer texture. Those who can afford it wear a white crape-like material of silk, or silk and cotton. The edge of this garment around the throat and in front, as well as the full sleeves, are often handsomely trimmed with silk lace. Over this shirt they always wear the "shintian," a garment corresponding to the sharwar of the men, and usually made of striped and figured print, but oftentimes of materials far more costly, and richly embroidered. This garment is very full; it is gathered and tied just below each knee, its ample folds falling gracefully to the feet. A quilted vest is often worn in cold weather next to the shirt. The "entary" of the women corresponds to the kuftan of the men, though it is longer, fuller below the waist, and its sleeves often reach to the ground. Unlike the kuftan, it fits close to the body, buttons at the waist, but is cut quite open in front, where the bosom is covered only by the fine shirt. It is slit up at each side as high as the hip, showing the full trowsers, of the same material and color: it is sometimes of bright scarlet, a color always in favor.

In the cities the ladies are fond of wearing entaries of great length, six yards being sometimes the measure from the shoulder. Even every-day garments are made after this fashion, particularly at the capitals, the long flowing ends of the train being caught up and fastened in the girdle when the wearer engages in household occupations. This robe and the trowsers are often of rich and expensive stuffs, gorgeously embroidered with silk of various colors, gold thread and spangles, pearls and precious stones. Instead of the antery is sometimes worn a "yelek," differing from it only in having no skirt, and reaching a

little below the waist. The trowsers worn with this yelek are fastened over it, and more nearly resemble the sharwar of the men, buttoning at the ankles somewhat in the shape of the gaiter.

The girdle worn by the women is of lighter material than that of the men, and usually consists of a square shawl, or handkerchief, of silk or muslin, bound loosely around the waist in such a manner that a corner hangs down the back or at the left side.* The handkerchief is usually carried in the girdle;



Muslim Lady in the Harim—the Jacket.

but some ladies of rank affect to wear a small hanjar, or dagger, with a jeweled handle. More than two hundred years ago, and within the memory of many now living, the women of Western Asia wore a belt or zone, clasped in front by two disks of silver or gold, sometimes set with precious stones; the belt itself was often of cloth of gold. Such a girdle is still worn by the married women in Circassia.†

A short jacket of broadcloth, silk, or velvet is worn over the

* Isa. iii., 24.

† Spencer, vol. ii., pp. 104, 205.

robe. This is often the most costly garment of the entire suit, being richly embroidered with gold. It reaches to the waist, its sleeves vary in fashion, and it is sometimes buttoned in front. This garment was once worn nearly as long as the European frock-coat. We have seen it embroidered with writing.*

The head-dress of the fair sex, and the manner of arranging the hair, varies considerably in different localities, and in large cities, especially at the capital, it is under the influence of fashion. Still there are certain general characteristics which belong to it everywhere, and distinguish it from any European styles. The hair of the back of the head is worn in one of two ways: it is gathered into one braid, or tress, which hangs down the back, precisely like the representation of Astarte and her train of virgins in the celebrated carvings of Pterium.† This mode of arranging the hair is now general among the Circassian women,‡ as well as among the inhabitants of Lesser Armenia.§ Among the Greeks of some of the islands, two tresses are worn instead of one. The other, and almost universal mode, is to divide the hair into numerous fine braids, from nine to twenty-five, but always of an odd number,‖ which hang down the back. Into each tress of hair are often braided three black silk cords, to which small gold coins are sometimes fastened at irregular distances, reaching down to the knees, glittering at every movement of the wearer (see page 509). The truly Oriental mode of wearing the front hair, which is affected by fashion only in the large cities, consists in clipping it straight across the forehead about an inch above the eyebrows, leaving a single lock hanging on each side of the face. This lock is called a "maksoos," and women sometimes swear by it, pulling it forward with the hand as men swear by their beards. Girls wear their hair parted in the middle of the forehead, and combed simply back behind the ears, where it hangs in several braids. The custom of *curling* the hair, once so prevalent in Egypt, as appears from the monuments and the mummies, seems now to be confined to the savage tribes of Africa, who "use a stick,

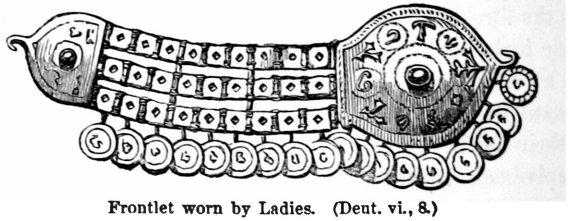
* Churchill, "Lebanon." vol. ii., p. 333; Rev. xix., 16.

† Boghaz-keuy, "Travels in Asia Minor," vol. ii., p. 118.

‡ Spencer, vol. ii., pp. 103, 205. § Morier, "Travels," vol. ii., p. 150.

‖ Lane, "Modern Egyptians," vol. i., p. 55.

with which they hold their locks and twist them round a screw until they curl into the desired form."* Such an instrument appears to have been used by Hebrew ladies in the days of Isaiah.† The women never go bare-headed any more than the men, but they wear a low and small tarboosh, or red cap, whose blue tassel is either of floss-silk spread equally over the crown, or of coarser twisted silk hanging down behind. A light handkerchief of printed muslin, whose tasteful colors are often very becoming, is bound around the red cap, and tied in a graceful knot at one side; and where the influence of fashion has not yet penetrated, several of these handkerchiefs form the complete turban of the women, always lighter and less formal than that of the men. Married women wear a light handkerchief of figured muslin thrown loosely over the head, and hanging down behind, whenever liable to meet a man about their premises, or when crossing the street to the house of a near neighbor. Such a handkerchief is the sole head-dress of girls over ten years of age, and they throw it off when indoors. The red cap is sometimes covered with gold coins sewed upon the crown, each overlapping the other like scales, so as completely to hide its surface, and appear like a small golden helmet. In place of coins is often worn a convex golden plate about five inches in diameter, sometimes of open-work, representing flowers and ornamented with diamonds.‡ A favorite form of these head-jewels is the star and crescent,§ which has from time immemorial been an emblem of Astarte, or Venus, who personi-



Frontlet worn by Ladies. (Deut. vi., 8.)

fied the generative power of nature; she is often represented with a star and crescent as an ornament upon her head. It is

* Bruce, vol. iii., p. 410. † Isa. iii., 22.

‡ Lane, "Modern Egyptians," vol. ii., Appendix A, p. 313.

§ Isa. iii., 23; Russell, "Aleppo," vol. i., p. 106; Lane, "Modern Egyptians," vol. ii., Appendix A, pp. 314, 315.

a singular fact that this symbol has now become identified with the faith of Islam, a monotheistic religion; but its adoption as such dates only from the capture of Constantinople, in the fifteenth century, for it was the emblem of ancient Byzantium.

In some districts an indispensable ornament of a woman is a row of gold coins sewed, as before mentioned, upon a band of cloth, and worn across the top of the forehead, being half concealed by the edge of the turban. A more graceful "frontlet" consists of rows of little gold plates, linked together, and hung across the forehead, to the lowest of which are suspended small coins of the same metal, which shake and glitter at every motion of the head.



The Law upon the Forehead. (Exod. xiii., 16.)

The custom of wearing frontlets appears to be quite ancient, as might be inferred from the direction of Moses to the children of Israel, to inscribe passages of Scripture upon the frontlets worn by their women.* The small box, containing a

* Deut. vi., 8. See in Lane, "Modern Egyptians," vol. ii., Appendix A., specimens of such head-jewels worn by Egyptian ladies.

strip of parchment with a passage of the law written upon it, which is worn on the forehead by the German Jews, especially when on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, does not seem to correspond with any existing Oriental custom, and appears to be of comparatively modern origin. Jewish women are not permitted to show their hair after marriage, and their head-dress is so contrived as completely to conceal the hair.* They, however, imitate the side-locks of other women by wearing black feathers in front of each ear. It is a curious fact that this custom also exists among the Circassians.†

Much has been said of the use of the "horn" by the women. The horn, worn almost from time immemorial by the women of Lebanon, both Christians and Muslims, as well as Druses, has lately almost disappeared; but a description of this curious and ancient head-dress will not be inappropriate. It consists of a hollow tube of silver, sometimes chased with gold, and adorned with precious stones, closed at the upper end, and somewhat trumpet-shaped at its base, where it is sewed to a little cushion, and set upon the top of the forehead. It inclines somewhat forward, and its base and cushion are fastened to what is called the "bridge," consisting of pieces of cloth, tightly bound together into a cord an inch thick, shaped like an arch: one end of this bridge is sewed to the cushion upon which is fastened the lower end of the horn, while the other end rests upon the crown of the head, having strong cords suspended from it, which hang down the back and reach to the knees, with huge tassels of red silk weighted with lead. These tassels are a counterpoise to the horn, which would otherwise topple over in front. The whole thing is rendered firm and steady by a net-work of cords, which connect the two ends of the bridge, as well as the little cushion which supports the horn, and by a strong band fastened tightly under the jaws.‡



The Lebanon Horn.

Surely there can be no stronger example of the tyranny

* Isa. xlvii., 2.

† Spencer, vol. ii., p. 205.

‡ Churchill, "Lebanon," vol. ii., pp. 297, 332.

of fashion than this, which has, besides its inconvenience, been known repeatedly to injure particular organs.

The veil is worn over the horn in such a manner as to leave its lower half uncovered in front. It is drawn over the face at pleasure, its drapery concealing all but one eye. Indeed the horn is never seen unveiled, even in the house. It is worn day and night, and, to relieve the wearer, a hole is made in the wall by the side of her bed, into which she inserts this incommodious appendage while she sleeps!

Some commentators find a reference to the horn of Lebanon, or some similar ornament worn by women, in numerous passages of the Scriptures, such as 2 Sam. xxii., 3; Psa. xviii., 2; lxxv., 4; cxii., 9; and cxlviii., 14. We can not favor this view, for all these passages contain references to men, and not to women, and are connected with the idea of conquest and the honors of victory. The only instance in which this language is used by a woman* appears to be a quotation from a psalm or hymn, for the phraseology, "He shall exalt the horn of his anointed" (verse 10), is a proof that she was not speaking of herself. The figure is evidently taken from the ram, the goat, the bull, the reem, etc.; while the budding of Daniel's horn† doubtless refers to the antlered stag, or roebuck. Now the horn is the appendage of the male, and not of the female of animals, while the Mount Lebanon horn is worn exclusively by women. Our own opinion is, that this, in common with various other peculiar head-dresses put on at marriage, and worn during the remainder of life, has no reference whatever to the horns of animals, but is connected with the idea, very prevalent in the East, that the marriage ceremony constitutes the crowning of the virgin, who is thenceforth a queen. She is, indeed, so called in the liturgies of all the Oriental churches; and the head-dress she then puts on for the first time bears a resemblance in varying degrees to a crown. On Mount Lebanon it is a horn eighteen or twenty inches in length; in the district of Kesrooán, near the cedars of North Lebanon, the women wear a large silver cup fastened to the back of the head; still farther north, this ornament takes the form of a small silver trumpet, attached to the left side of the head just

* 1 Sam. ii., 1. † Psa. cxxxii., 17; Ezek. xxix., 21.



Various Head-jewels of married Women.

above the ear; while in Aintab the women wear on the top of the head a flat, circular disk of embossed silver eight inches in diameter, fastened by a handkerchief tied under the chin. At Sivri-Hissar, in Central Asia Minor, a similar disk is worn in the same manner, in the middle of which is set a small silver box containing a charm, or talisman, against "the evil eye."

It is worthy of note that these customs are confined to narrow districts, and that, while otherwise universal, they have never been adopted by the Turks, but are always limited to the aboriginal inhabitants, which would seem to be a proof of their antiquity. We shall speak elsewhere of the crowning of the bride with the *dodos*, a ceremony which, so far as we are aware, never prevails where the head-dresses we have described are worn by married women.

It is not improbable that a head-dress similar to the horn of Mount Lebanon was in use at one time among some of the Hebrew women; for such a coiffure is now worn at Tunis and Algiers, in Africa, exclusively by the Jewish married women; it is there considered an antiquated custom, which is dying out.



Jewish Horn at Algiers.

Oriental women are notoriously fond of decking with jewelry, not only their heads, but other parts of the body as well. They wear ear-rings of various forms, some of them reaching even below the shoulders, and being of considerable weight.* The

* Gen. xxxv., 4; Isa. iii., 20; Ezek. xvi., 12.

first of the references below is supposed to imply that figures of false gods were engraven upon the ear-rings of Jacob's wives. This is well known to accord with the practice of antiquity, as will be seen in a later chapter in the picture of a golden ear-ring, bearing a laughing Cupid, which was found not far from Padan-aram, in Upper Mesopotamia. Among the Bedawy Arabs even men and boys sometimes wear ear-rings.* The side cartilages of the nose are bored, and rings of gold, silver, or brass are suspended from them, sometimes forming a chain, the other extremity of which is fastened to the ear.† The middle cartilage of the nose is also adorned with a ring, sometimes so large that it reaches to the chin, and must be removed at every meal.‡ This custom is now confined to the lower classes and the rural districts of the countries extending from Lesser Armenia to Egypt. Among some of the African tribes women sometimes have no less than seven holes for rings: one in the middle cartilage, and three on each side of the nose.§ Rings are worn on all the fingers—even on the thumbs—and are often set with precious stones.‖ The most unique we have seen is frequently given at betrothals, and consists of two gold rings linked together at one spot, each being hung round with little flat spangles of gold called *bask*.¶

There is great variety both in the form and in the materials of their bracelets, which are almost universally worn, being of gold, silver, brass, or copper, and even of glass. Some of them, made of the purest gold, show great beauty of workmanship, and are sold by weight, as of old.** The poor often wear them of a single piece of colored glass. Men, however, no longer wear these ornaments. Ankle-rings are worn almost exclusively by the women of the Desert Arabs, or in the rural districts; they are, however, more common in Egypt. These knock together, making a ringing sound as they walk, and are probably alluded to by the prophet Isaiah (iii., 16–18). The necklace is not so indispensable an ornament as the bracelet, yet it

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* Exod. xxxii., 2; Judg. viii., 24.

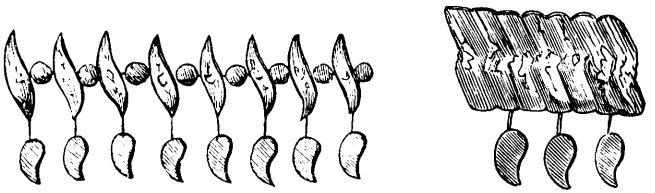
† Spencer, vol. ii., p. 104; Smith, vol. ii., p. 232; Lane, "Modern Egypt," vol. ii., Appendix A., p. 323.

‡ Gen. xxiv., 47 (Hebrew, *nose-rings* for ear-rings); Judg. viii., 26; Ezek. xvi., 12.

§ Pococke, vol. i., p. 129. ‖ Cant. v., 14.

¶ Exod. xxxv., 22; Isa. iii., 21. ** Gen. xxiv., 22.

is very generally worn, especially among the wealthier classes. This graceful ornament often consists of a string of gold coins of one size, with a larger one in the centre, which lies upon the breast; or it may be of several strings of pearls supporting a central ornament, formed of diamonds or other precious stones, or whatever valuable trinkets the wearer may possess. Some necklaces are wrought of pure gold, in curious and beautiful patterns, precisely similar to those found in ancient tombs. We have seen little heart-shaped plates of gold, hanging from each link of the necklace, and sparkling at every motion.*



Eastern Necklaces. (Cant. iv., 9.)

On occasions of special festivity, the ladies often wear, in addition to the ornaments already specified, long chains of gold of various patterns and forms, hung from the neck and extending below the girdle. Such a chain is sometimes formed of large sequins, and passes over either shoulder, reaching to the hip, whence a broader chain hangs down half-way to the feet. Sometimes a box as large as the hand hangs from the necklace upon the breast; it is of gold, either plain, or adorned with precious stones, and wrought with many openings, through which issues the perfume of ambergris, or the musk paste called "seraglio pastilles;" for Orientals are extremly fond of strong perfumes, and live too much out-of-doors to be hurt by them.† The display on festive occasions is sometimes extremely gorgeous; for their suits are of the richest stuffs, and highly embroidered, which have been acquired in times of prosperity, and, not being subject to the changes of fashion, are worn by successive generations, and sometimes lent to neighbors and relatives, being carefully kept in large chests of cypress-wood, whose odor preserves them from the ravages of moths.‡ Our

* Exod. xxxv., 22; Numb. xxxi., 50; Isa. iii., 20, where the word *tablet* should be translated *necklace*.

† Chardin, vol. vii., p. 86.

‡ Job xxvii., 16, 17.

Lord refers to this custom in Matt. vi., 19. Ezekiel minutely describes these chests and their use, the only difference consisting in their being made of cedar instead of cypress.* It is probably owing in great measure to the insecurity of property in real estate that so much of it is laid out in gold and jewelry. We have known families possessed in all of some five thousand dollars, one half at least of whose property was invested in so unprofitable a manner. Even the women of isolated mountain villages, particularly those of Koordistan, unable to adorn themselves with ornaments of gold, sometimes wear a complete breastplate and helmet of silver coins, closely sewed upon a piece of cloth, or to their cap of felt.†

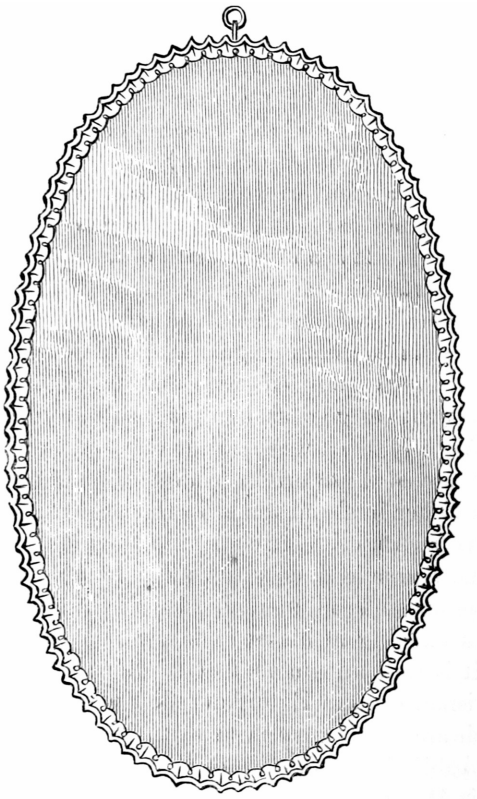
The reader of ancient history, both sacred and profane, can not fail to have noticed that this is not a new trait in the character of Orientals. It is an illustration of the appropriateness of St. Paul's exhortation that "women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broidered (margin, *plaited*) hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array."‡ Repeatedly have we noticed some matron who, after clinging to her ornaments of gold as her inalienable dowry, began to read the Word of God, when, all at once, and of her own accord, she removed those bright trinkets from her brow, and offered them to her husband to aid in the support of the family; but we have seen no similar change in the plaiting of the hair, which, as now practiced, does not seem to be opposed to the spirit of the apostolic injunction. He doubtless had reference to practices existing in his own day, which have now disappeared. It is well known that even after the commencement of the Christian era the Egyptian ladies wore large and costly wigs, which are found preserved in their mummies; and it is highly probable that the ladies of Greece and the Greek colonies in Asia Minor, in the apostle's day, were in nowise behind the Egyptian dames in this respect, as may be judged from the specimens of female head-dresses, in terra cotta, found among the ruins of Smyrna, and dating not long previous to that period.

Socks are worn only in the colder regions, and the shoes of the women are of the same material as those of the men; the

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* Ezek. xxvii., 24. † Ussher, p. 353. ‡ 1 Tim. ii., 9.

yellow color being worn by the Muslim race alone. They consist of a small slipper, worn indoors, and made of simple morocco, richly embroidered with colored silks, gold-thread, and even pearls. In warm climates, however, and in the summer season, the feet are bare, and dyed with henna as an ornament. They put their feet into the common thick-soled, yellow slip-



Lady's portable Looking-glass. (Exod. xxxviii., 8.)

per whenever they step off the mat or carpet. In some places, however, the ladies move about the house on "kubkabs" (clogs), made sometimes of dark-colored wood inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and held to the foot by an embroidered leather strap. The ladies of Damascus use kubkabs eight or nine inches high, in order, it is said, to appear taller than they really are. Out-of-doors, or in cold weather, is worn a small

mest, or sock of morocco, similar to that of the men, with a yellow slipper over it.

We have now completed the description of the women's dress, and must add the finishing touch by reminding the reader of what we have mentioned respecting the dyeing of the hands and feet with henna, the leaves, it will be remembered, of the camphire plant,* which are crushed when dry,



Lady's portable Looking-glass—Back of Mirror.

and made into a paste with a little water; this is spread upon the palms of the hands, the soles of the feet, and around the ends of the fingers and toes, and bound up overnight, after which the paste is washed off, and leaves an all but indelible mark. Elderly dames very commonly dye their gray locks

* Cant. i., 14.

with henna. But Eastern women are almost as fond of the kohl as of the henna. This kohl consists of a collyrium of antimony, or other substance considered beneficial to the eye as well as ornamental, which is kept in a small bottle, and applied with a probe of silver, ivory, or wood to the edges of the eyelids, for the purpose of blackening them, and thus enhancing the brightness of the eye, which is usually large, shaded by long black lashes, and decidedly the finest feature of Oriental women.* Varieties of the henna and kohl constitute the cosmetic dyes used by them in modern as in ancient times.† Kohl must have been in high repute as early as the time of Job, for he named his youngest daughter Keren-happuch, which signifies "a horn" (bottle) "for" (eye) "paint" (*i. e.*, kohl or antimony).‡ Orientals admire eyebrows that meet over the nose, presenting the appearance of a bow; and when nature has denied them this ornament, they imitate it by artificial paint. This is removed in case of mourning, and the hair growing there naturally is plucked in order to disfigure the face. This was also done anciently; for Moses forbade the Hebrews to "make any baldness between their eyes for the dead."§

The bathing and open-air life of the women, as well as their being veiled from the sun, conduce more than any such artificial appliances to enhance the beauty of their complexion, where there exists the solid basis of a good constitution. In adjusting her ornaments and arranging her head-dress, every woman makes use of a little circular looking-glass, with or without a handle, and usually framed with wood inlaid with mother-of-pearl. It corresponds in form and size with the metallic mirrors occasionally found among the ruins of ancient cities; such, but with polished metal instead of glass, were the mirrors offered by the Hebrew women to the Lord, to be made into a brazen laver for the service of the tabernacle.‖ Among the wealthy a small oval mirror is sometimes used, set in a frame of solid wrought silver, and the ladies of Constantinople

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* 2 Kings, ix., 30; Prov. vi., 25; Jer. iv., 30 (Hebrew, *kakhal*); Ezek. xxiii., 40.

† Wilkinson, vol. ii., p. 343; Layard, "Nineveh," vol. ii., p. 254.

‡ Job xlii., 14.

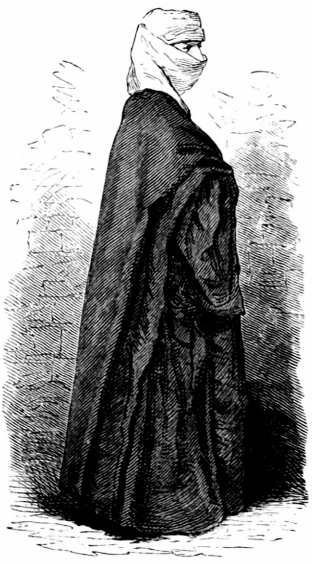
§ Deut. xiv., 1. This rendering is supported by the versions in Chaldee, Syriac, and Greek.

‖ Exod. xxxviii., 8; Job xxxvii., 18.

have a portable looking-glass, whose frame and cover is faced with crimson velvet heavily embroidered with gold. In the interior of the country glass is still rare, and fragments of looking-glass are often seen, set in plaster, in the walls of apartments of the harims.

Ladies of the higher and middle classes often chew the white gum called "mastic," which fully supplies the place of the tooth-brush, which they never use, and, besides whitening the teeth, sweetens also the breath. This gum is obtained by incisions in the stem of a shrub grown exclusively in the island of Scio, so highly prized as to be a government monopoly, affected to the support of the *valideh sultan*, or queen-dowager.

Oriental women never wear combs in their hair; those which they use at home, or at the bath, are broad, short, thick in the middle, and very fine. They are of the same pattern as those which have been found in Egyptian tombs.*



Veiled Woman. (Gen. xxxviii., 14.)

Oriental women never show themselves unveiled before men other than their near relatives. On such occasions, however, the veil worn differs considerably in different parts of the country. The most common form consists of a sheet of white cotton, or mixed silk and cotton, ample enough to cover the whole person from head to foot. In putting on this veil the skirts of the antery are first caught up into the girdle, and the folds of the shintian, which usually hang down loose about the ankles, are in like manner gathered out of sight. The veil is then folded in two equal parts, and the middle of it is made fast round the waist, so that the lower portion hangs nearly to the ground, while the upper half is brought over the head as far as the forehead,

* Wilkinson, vol. ii., p. 343.

the arms and hands being left free to gather it in front and draw it over the face, concealing all but the eyes. The Mount Lebanon veil only reaches half way down the skirt. In some districts the rigid Muslim ladies wear a piece of black crape, which is stiff, and projects from the face so as to enable the wearer to see from beneath it as she walks. The various styles of veils worn in Egypt have been fully described by Mr. Lane.* At the capital, and in some of the larger cities, the outdoor costume of the women consists, first, of a cloak, or ferejeh, whose ample folds and wide sleeves completely envelop the person, while a broad, square cape, reaching nearly to the ground, effectually conceals the form. The material is a light woolen stuff, which the Muslim women may wear of any bright shade—apple-green, sky-blue, pink, and bright yellow being the favorite hues, while all other women must robe themselves in neutral tints. This, added to their dull-colored mests and slippers, enables one at first glance to distinguish them from Muslim ladies. In all cases, the head, face, shoulders, and breast are completely covered with folds of the finest muslin, leaving only the eyes in sight.† The circumstances in which the veil is worn or dispensed with, and the influence of polygamy in restraining feminine liberty in this respect, are topics which properly belong to the following chapter.

Let it now suffice to remark that the large veil just described is almost exclusively worn by the inhabitants of the larger towns, and even there by those in easy circumstances, and that rural occupations tend to substitute for so cumbrous an appendage the light-colored handkerchief which city ladies also wear when in the house.

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* "Modern Egyptians," vol. i., pp. 57–61.

† Dicæarchus, describing the dress of the women of ancient Thebes, says that "their eyes only are seen; the other parts of their faces are covered by their garments."

CHAPTER VII.

LIFE IN THE FAMILY.

We have purposely confined ourselves, in the two preceding chapters, to what would be most likely to arrest the eye of an Occidental within the walls of an Eastern home. We now propose to go a little farther, and call the attention of our readers to the different members of the household, and the manner in which their several relations to each other are sustained.

Love is an irrepressible sentiment of the human heart, and can never be wholly extinguished by such a state of society as does not recognize it to be the foundation of the conjugal relation. It often asserts itself with a power the more irresistible, for the restraint laid upon it. The Oriental theory is that love comes after marriage, and that it can be kept from premature development by the complete separation of the sexes. Thus, love, not being permitted to enter as an element in the formation of the conjugal relation, marriage becomes, in a good measure, an affair of pecuniary interest, and, on account of the usually early age of the parties, depends chiefly upon the will and choice of their parents. This also occurs in all the South of Europe, and indeed, to a great extent, even in France. So Abraham, after the death of Sarah, procured a wife for their son Isaac.* It is particularly upon the mother, aunts, and sisters of a young man that the duty devolves of looking up for him a suitable wife. When such an object is in view, not content with inquiries among their friends and acquaintances concerning all the marriageable girls of families occupying a similar social position to their own, they sally forth in a body on their tour of inspection. Custom permits them to call at any house for such a purpose, and they signify the object of their visit by asking for "a glass of water from the hand of the young lady of the house," *i. e.*, of her who would naturally be

* Gen. xxiv., 2–4.

understood to be the candidate for the union in view. The company are invariably greeted with the utmost courtesy, and ushered at once into the reception-room, where they are entertained with conversation till the appearance of the young lady in question, who presently enters, bearing sweetmeats and water, of which each guest partakes. She is arrayed in all the finery and jewels which belong to her dowry, nor does any one hesitate, or deem it any impropriety, to inquire of the damsel's mother what besides is to constitute her marriage portion. Should the call result in a favorable impression, and the friends of the girl not show themselves averse to the match, the next step is for the ladies of the young man's family to contrive to meet the other party at the public bath, so as to make sure that no physical defect whatever exists to mar the personal charms of the young maiden. It must not be supposed, however, that those who belong to the unfortunate class laboring under the disadvantage of physical deformity are therefore necessarily debarred from the connubial state. It is a disgrace in the East to remain unmarried, especially for woman,* and so the comely and symmetrical marry those of their own station and social position, often still higher, while the less favored ones usually form alliances with their inferiors in wealth and rank.

When both parties have made up their minds as to the desirableness of the connection, a formal proposal is made, and the dowry is then discussed and settled. The latter transaction implies that the husband purchases his wife, and that he must pay her price to her parents or to herself. Whatever dowry the husband thus settles upon his wife, and whatever she brings with her as a marriage portion, is her own to take away in case of divorce, unless indeed the divorce be granted on her own application, in which case she can take nothing away.

In the rural districts, among the village farmers and the nomad tribes, whose manners have been least affected by the influence of civilization, the marriage contract is avowedly an act of purchase, the parents selling the daughter, whom they regard as their property, and whose acquiescence is secured by means of a few additional trifling gifts or trinkets. This is

* Isa. iv., 1.

practiced by all the Circassian tribes, both Muslim and pagan, among whom the father sells his daughter, and the brother his sister, to the highest bidder.* So much for the high civilization which some travelers affect to discover among this people. It is the same with the Crimean Tartars, who have imported most of their customs unchanged from Central Asia.†

Nor is this practice confined to the northern parts of the country, for it prevails throughout the whole of Western Asia, including Persia, and extending to the southern limits of Arabia, as well as to Egypt and Africa. Among the modern Jews the amount of the dowry varies with the condition of the bride's family, according to a fixed scale.‡ The Mosaic law set it down at a uniform rate of fifty shekels, or twenty-five dollars.§ Among the country people and poor nomads of Judea, the price of a wife often ranges from one hundred and fifty to two hundred and fifty dollars. She thus becomes an article of luxury, far above the means of a poor fellah.‖ The same principle prevailed in the same country in the olden time. In that masterly narrative where Abraham's trusty old servant is described as procuring a wife for his master's son in Mesopotamia among his kindred, we read that he not only bestowed upon Rebekah "jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and raiment," but that he also gave to her brother, who, at his father's death, had become the head of the family, "and to her mother, precious things," for he had come with ten camels of his master, "all the goods of his master being in his hand."¶ As for Jacob, Rebekah's son, he came on the same errand himself with his staff alone, and being too poor to buy a wife, he worked by contract seven years for each of the daughters of his shrewd uncle, Laban.** And this, too, is still common in the East among the same class of people, the father-in-law endeavoring, like Laban, to make a good bargain by protracting the term and advancing the price.†† The propriety of thus purchasing a wife is so generally recognized by the people, that the most deeply-seated prejudices are often overcome by the contracting of a marriage between persons of different re-

* Spencer, vol. ii., p. 323. † Ibid., p. 94. ‡ Picart, vol. i., p. 240.
§ Compare Exod. xxii., 17, with Deut. xxii., 29. ‖ Lynch, p. 393.
¶ Gen. xxiv., 10, 53. ** Gen. xxxi., 41.
†† Spencer, vol. ii., p. 94; 2 Sam. iii., 14; Hosea iii., 2; Ruth iv., 10.

ligions. Even the gypsies, though greatly despised, are thus enabled to obtain the daughters of Armenians, and the Koords the daughters of Turks.

The degrees of consanguinity which forbid marriage among Christians and Muslims are derived from the Mosaic law; and the Nestorians, who have preserved the practices of primitive Christianity with probably the least alteration, maintain, like the others, that marriage is unlawful within four generations, both of the man and of the woman.* So carefully is this rule observed by Eastern Christians, that we have known the nuptial ceremony to be suddenly arrested and broken off by the accidental discovery of the existence of such a relationship between the parties. As the Koran, like the Hebrew legislation, allows polygamy, it may be regarded as considering the marriage relation from the same point of view as did the Hebrews; and the present condition of its votaries may be taken as a fair exponent of the state of the marriage relation among the Jews in the days of their national existence.

Respecting the vexed question whether Lev. xviii., 18, prohibits marriage with a deceased wife's sister, the Koran applies it to a polygamous connection of two sisters with one husband.†

The Mosaic law ordained that a man should marry his brother's widow in case he left no child, in order to raise up seed to his brother. The object of this regulation, especially when taken in connection with the law of the jubilee, was evidently the prevention of the accumulation of landed property, and the avoiding of pauperism.‡ The Jews of the present day still adhere to this law, although they have lost the land of their inheritance. Among the Arabs it takes the milder form of relationship conferring a prior claim to the hand of a girl, without, however, obviating the necessity of paying her price; for we have known a match, in which the parties were greatly interested, to have been broken up by the interference of a relative, who obtained the girl (a young miss of thirteen) for his son of five, giving in exchange his daughter to her brother. The poor girl could not, of course, express any personal preference, for that would have been deemed highly indecorous, and would

* Perkins, p. 324. † Lane, vol. i., p. 128. ‡ Deut. xxv., 5, 6.

have availed nothing. She was but an article of merchandise, raised to be sold for the benefit of her proprietors!

Among Muslims generally marriage with a brother's widow is simply allowed, and the children born of such a connection enjoy no special privilege.*

It is, however, worthy of notice that the Mosaic law upon this subject is a mere repetition of a "prior law" already existing among the patriarchs.† The only trace now left of such a law among other nations than the Jews is to be met with in the customs of a race of African savages. Bruce relates that among the Gallas, a warlike heathen people, neighbors and enemies of the Abyssinians, when the eldest brother dies leaving younger brothers behind him, and a widow young enough to bear children, the youngest brother of all is obliged to marry her; but the children of the marriage are always accounted as if they were those of the eldest brother; nor does this marriage of the youngest brother to the widow entitle him to any part of the fortune of the deceased.‡ The ground of this law among the Galla tribes appears to have been originally the same as led to the adoption of a similar practice by the Hebrews, among whom the principle of inheritance became an effectual means of preventing the too great accumulation of real estate in an agricultural country, and the prevalence of pauperism. For with those African savages, when a man becomes old and unfit for war he is obliged to surrender his whole effects to his eldest son, who is bound to give him aliment and nothing else. These people hold to the rights of primogeniture as strictly as did the Israelites in the olden time, and the Arabs after them until Mohammed, and among some tribes even to the present day; but the Gallas carry it so far that the eldest son inherits every thing, giving to his brothers and sisters only what their father had named as theirs at their birth, with the increase of the same until the time of his death. It is interesting to meet traces of ancient customs long after the causes which led to them have ceased to operate. They are like the "bird tracks" found in rocks, once a soft mud, which tell us that creatures of which we have no other trace passed that way many centuries ago.

There is another incongruity resulting from the practice of

* Lane, vol. i., p. 123. † Gen. xxxviii., 8. ‡ Bruce, vol. ii., p. 410.

purchasing a wife, unfortunately not unheard of in more highly favored lands. It consists in the disparity of years between the parties. Girls are usually married at thirteen or fourteen, sometimes even nine or ten years of age. Lynch mentions "a mere child" of a bride, eight years old (page 159); and at a Jewish wedding which we once attended, the bride was so young that she was carried about in the arms of her relatives. Nor does it unfrequently happen that a girl is compelled to marry a boy much younger than herself. But most common of all is the practice of an old man espousing a young girl. We have known a man of sixty to marry a child of twelve. She ran away from home the next day, but, strange enough, became eventually an excellent and devoted wife. King David was persuaded to do something of the kind in his old age, showing that the practice was not unknown at that day; but it seems the more strange in his case, as we are told he had female slaves and concubines in his household.* These are all, however, exceptional cases, the vast majority of unions being formed upon the same principles as are deemed expedient and proper in other countries.

Among the Christians, indeed, there is considerable freedom of intercourse between young people, so that the parties can hardly be said to be quite ignorant of each other's character or personal attractions—a circumstance of some importance, since divorce is not allowed by them, as it is by every other religious sect in the country.

The parties are considered as affianced as soon as the marriage contract has been agreed to; but the nuptial ceremony is sometimes deferred for a considerable period.† Meantime the parties are not permitted to see each other, but may exchange tokens of remembrance and affection. The young lady usually sends specimens of her needle-work; while choice fruits and flowers, among which the narcissus and the carnation, specially consecrated to affianced maidens, are offered by the young man or his mother, particularly on festive occasions, as the Bairam, or the Feast of Easter.

The marriage ceremony differs among the many nations and tribes which now occupy Western Asia according to the usa-

* 2 Sam. v., 13.

† Deut. xx., 7; xxii., 23.

ges of the countries whence they came, or the religions they profess. It would be tedious, as well as foreign to our purpose, to give a full account of them all. But some of these rites offer points of resemblance to Scriptural scenes, and to such we now invite the attention of our reader.

The costume of the bride is deemed a matter of the highest importance, since much may depend upon the effect produced by the first sight of her which her husband is supposed to obtain. She sometimes wears the very bridal suit which her mother wore before her, and, in some instances, that of her mother-in-law; but usually a new outlay is made for the occasion at the expense of the bridegroom. The friends of the bride's family take this opportunity to show their good-will by sending presents which, with the rest of the trousseau, are exhibited in a room set apart for the purpose during the week preceding the wedding. Orientals are celebrated for their love of display and magnificence, and some of the costumes prepared for such occasions are rich and gorgeous beyond expression. The following description of a bridal entary, or wedding robe, was given us by an Oriental tailor, who had often seen, as well as assisted, in making such a dress. It should measure, he said, six yards from the shoulders to the end of the train, and the long sleeves must sweep the floor. One of the finest he described was of rose-colored silk; it was spread out upon a carpeted floor, while seven women skilled in embroidery worked upon one side of the long breadths, and seven upon the other side, under the direction of an embroiderer in chief of their own sex, who designed the pattern, and appointed to each one her work. The first layers of embroidering with gold-thread had already been wrought by men, and the women were now putting on the finishing touches by sewing on golden spangles and pearls. The sum paid to the directress alone for superintending the needle-work on this single robe was five hundred dollars, while her charge for the work done by her subordinates was two thousand five hundred dollars. In speaking of it, she said, in a deprecating tone, "Ten years ago I used to make such dresses for the Sultan's slaves, and now he has grown so economical that I make them only for his wives." The entire cost of this robe, materials and all, was estimated at ten thousand dollars. Indeed these garments

are often priceless, for they are embroidered with diamonds and other precious stones, in clusters or bouquets, the buttons from the throat to the waist and sleeves consisting of diamond "solitaires!" These are worn, not by princely and royal personages alone, but also by the wives and daughters of grandees and bankers in Constantinople, Cairo, Damascus, and all the chief cities of the empire. The foregoing description adds force to such passages of Holy Writ as refer to a bride's attire, especially when taken in connection with what has already been said of the jewelry with which she is decked, and of certain ornaments which she then wears for the first time, as the horn of Mount Lebanon, and similar crown-like adornments (see page 529). And now, also, let the reader peruse such passages as Isa. xlix., 18; lxi., 10; lxii., 5; and the touching lament of Jer. ii., 32, "Can a bride forget her attire?" So the apocalyptic John, in portraying the glory and transcendent beauty of the New Jerusalem, as she first appeared to him "coming down from God out of heaven,"* found no language better suited to his purpose than that which represents a bride when first seen by the impatient bridegroom, radiant with all the adornments we have just described.



The Bridal Crown, or Dodos.

But the bride is not only arrayed in the richest garments her friends can afford to furnish; she now also assumes the distinguishing badge of a married woman, which varies in different parts of the country. Among the Jews it consists of an entire concealment of the hair, in place of which she wears, in front of her ears, tips of black ostrich or other feathers. On Mount Lebanon the tall silver horn is now worn for the first time, and in like manner

* Rev. xxi., 2.

similar crown-like ornaments in other parts of the country. There are extensive districts in which the high pasteboard cap called "dodos" is worn, but only until the marriage ceremonies are over. This cap is fastened to the head by a band passing under the chin. The Jews also encircle the head with a wreath of flowers, and throw a veil of scarlet gauze over the bride; while the Muslims leave the face uncovered, and set it off with bits of gold-leaf and black patches, or "beauty-spots." The Christians, however, among whom a part of the ceremony takes place in public, envelop the bride with a silken veil of bright scarlet—the bridal color—whose heavy folds, falling to her feet, completely conceal her head and face, and part of her person. It is an interesting fact that the dodos was in use among the ancients, as seems to be proved by a terra-cotta head found in Asia Minor, probably not less than two thousand years old, which wears the dodos with a garland around it.



Ancient Dodos.

It is customary for the bride to go through her toilet, and other preliminaries, in the presence of her female friends and guests, with an accompaniment of timbrel and song. This occupies a good portion of two days. The henna having been applied to the hands and feet of the bride overnight, the following day is spent by the whole company at the bath, which has been already secured for their exclusive use.* On the evening of the marriage, at an early hour, the bride is led into the reception-room, where she is surrounded by her friends, eager to assist in her final toilet. Her hair is braided into numerous fine plaits; she is arrayed in her wedding-robe; a girdle is wound around her waist, at the same time that wishes are expressed similar to those with which the friends of the parting Rebekah bade her godspeed,† and, finally, the significant dodos is fastened upon her head, and she stands ready for the coming of the bridegroom. All this has transpired in the midst of music and plaintive songs suggestive of the young damsel's approaching departure and separation from her childhood's home, at which the bride is expected, of

* Ruth iii., 3; Ezek. xxiii., 40; Eph. v., 26, 27.

† Gen. xxiv., 60.

course, to be greatly moved, and many of the sympathetic company shed their tears. But this does not hinder the utterance of many a playful remark and jest, as well as a great deal of tittering and laughing on the part of the younger maidens.

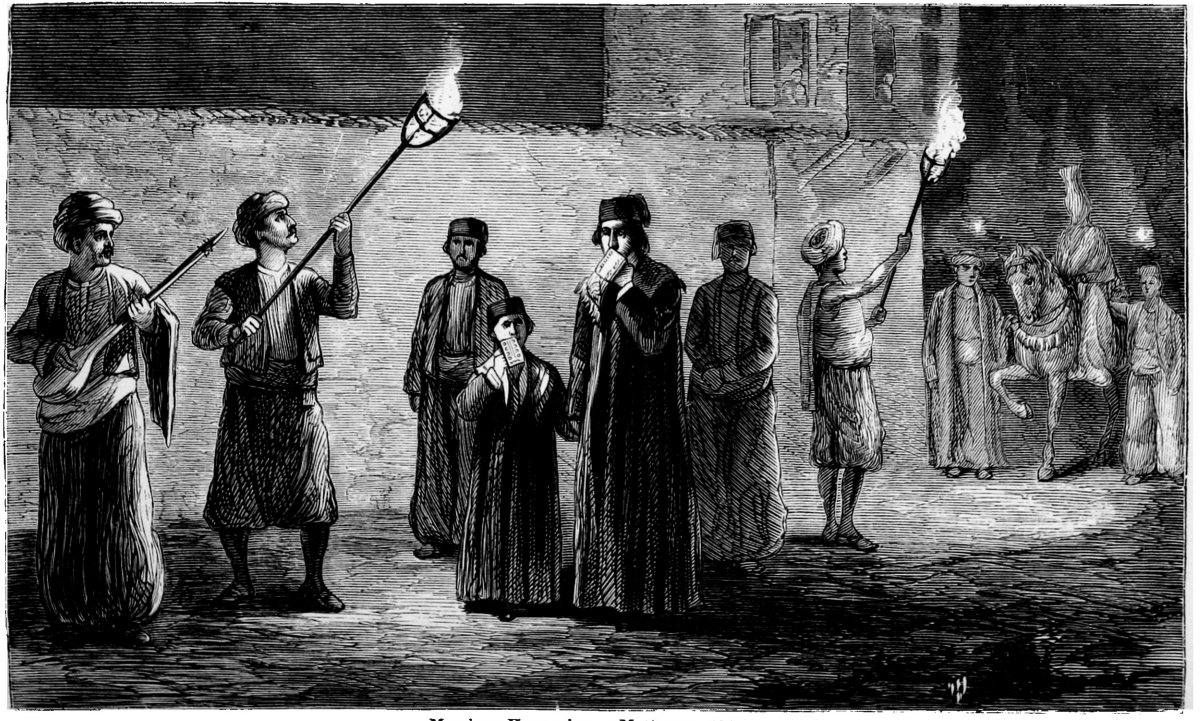
Marriage festivities often commence a week before the wedding-day, and continue for the same length of time after its consummation.* Friends are invited,† and come from day to day, sometimes from quite a distance, remaining also at night in many cases, partaking of the feast, rejoicing with the family, and witnessing the various performances.‡ Music is indispensable, and professional dancers are employed to divert the company. Other shows are sometimes added, according to the means of the family. Meantime similar festivities are going on at the house of the bride's parents. So numerous are the guests sometimes at these marriage feasts, that they must needs sit down at separate tables successively, till all are served. In Abyssinia such an occasion never passes without a great rush, and even a fight, for a share in the feast.§ But in Western Asia things are done more decorously. The guests, though previously invited, are summoned by messengers sent to their houses or places of business, who say, "Come, for all things are now ready."‖ To the more honorable, the invitation is sent by several messengers in succession, and they are escorted to the festive scene by a band of music.

The rich distribute garments among the guests—sometimes entire suits, but more frequently the outer garment alone, or jibbeh—or a piece of cloth sufficient to make one. This custom is alluded to in Matt. xxii., 11: the king found a man feasting who had not on one of the new garments he had distributed, and, considering him an uninvited intruder, he had him ejected into the outer night.

Most weddings are now celebrated in the day-time. This is particularly the case in the country districts. When the parties dwell in different villages, the bridegroom, accompanied by his friends, all well mounted and armed, and escorted with *da-ool* (drum) and *zoornà* (hautboy), repair to the house of the bride, and escort her to her new home, riding on horseback, or in a

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* Judg. xiv., 12. † John ii., 1, 2. ‡ Jer. vii., 34; xvi., 9; Rev. xviii., 23.
§ Parkyns, vol. ii., p. 40. ‖ Luke xiv., 17.



Marriage Procession. (Matt. xxv., 10.)

takhtravan (see page 226), as described by Josephus.* In the towns of Palestine and Egypt the bride walks under a canopy, escorted on either side by a man with a drawn sword, as if to denote the value set upon her by the bridegroom and his friends, as well as their readiness to defend the prize by force of arms.† This custom doubtless originated in occurrences similar to the one narrated by Josephus in the above reference.

The Armenians seem to be almost the only people who retain the Jewish practice, referred to by our Saviour, of celebrating their weddings in the night,‡ for the Nestorians commence very early in the morning, simply to accommodate their priests, who must not break their fast until the ceremony is over.§

Sunday is considered the most auspicious day for the ceremony; and as soon as night sets in, which is at an early hour, since marriages take place mostly in the winter season, the house of the bridegroom presents an animated scene. Every one is busily engaged in the final preparations; the last touches are given to the toilet of the young groom, which has already received due attention at the bath, where the whole morning has been spent with his young companions.‖ He puts on his wedding garment, which is of the finest broadcloth his means will allow, and sometimes even embroidered with gold, while his jibbeh is of striped silk. Midnight is the hour when the ceremony takes place at the church. As the time approaches lanterns and *meshals* (torches) are brought out, lighted, and held aloft in front and along the side of the procession. The musicians take the lead, playing upon the *ood* (guitar), the *kanoon*, the *kemenjeh* (violin), and the *tamboora* (lute). Then comes the bridegroom, wearing, for the occasion, upon his shoulders, a handkerchief of scarlet silk, fringed with gold thread, and richly embroidered with winged cherub-heads (Cupids?). He modestly covers his mouth with a folded silk handkerchief, also elaborately embroidered, and leads by the hand a little boy dressed precisely like himself, and called "the mock bridegroom," who imitates his slightest movements, and thus diverts the company. Then follow the friends and guests, after whom comes a handsomely caparisoned horse, mounted by a smart-

* Book xiii., chap. i., § 4; see also 1 Macc. ix., 37–41.

† Lynch, p. 448; Lane, vol. i., p. 208.

‡ Matt. xxv., 1–12.

§ Perkins, p. 234.

‖ Judg. xiv., 10, 11.

ly dressed little girl, called "the mock bride," while the women of the household bring up the rear. The bridegroom is expected to kiss the hand of every one he meets, and receive his or her blessing. Meanwhile the festivities at the bride's house gradually subside; the company show signs of weariness, grow drowsy, and, with the exception of a few who keep on the alert, drop asleep on the divans where they sit waiting.

At length some more watchful matron perceives the glare of the advancing torches; soon the sound of music, and occasionally a joyful shout, are heard breaking the midnight stillness, and presently a cry resounds through the house, "Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him."* At this, the girls and younger women rise in haste, light their lamps, lanterns, or candles, and sally forth to meet the coming procession, which soon arrives, and enters crowding into the house. After a short interval of rest and refreshment, they demand their bride. A show of resistance, and sometimes quite a struggle, ensues, when she is surrounded by the bridegroom's friends, taken possession of, and borne away. The bridegroom goes first, as before, accompanied by his friends and guests; then comes the bride, accompanied by the attendant group of women, and mounted on the handsomely caparisoned horse, whose reins are grasped on either side by one of her own and one of her intended husband's nearest relatives.

The ceremony at the church consists in placing the two parties face to face, with their heads so inclined that their foreheads touch. The priest throws a veil over both, while he pronounces the blessing, reads certain passages of Scripture relating to marriage, and closes with prayers.

Among the Nestorians, the bride remains in a corner of the apartment, or the church, during the greater part of the ceremony, which may take place in either. When they have reached a part where hands are to be joined, several women catch hold of the bride, veiled as she is, and pull her by main strength half across the room toward her intended husband, and several men at the same time seize the bridegroom, who is at first equally resolute in his modest reluctance, but finally yields and advances toward the bride. A smart struggle ensues in

* Matt. xxv., 6.

his effort to secure her hand; but he at length succeeds, and both submissively stand near the officiating clergy till the end of the service. At the close, the bishop first, and then the multitude, kiss the married pair.*

We have thus far described such weddings as are celebrated in connection with religious ceremonies. It is, however, to be remembered that there are no such rites practiced among Muslims, Jews, and the remnants of heathen tribes, who now constitute by far the greater portion of the people of Western Asia. Among all these, marriage consists in the betrothal, or the contract, sometimes written,† but more commonly verbal, of the parties concerned, after which nothing remains but the removal of the bride from her father's house to that of the bridegroom, or of his father. In this respect the customs of these people bear a close resemblance to the practices of the ancient Hebrews. Isaac married Rebekah by proxy, through a simple verbal contract. Eliezer brought her to his master, and told him all things that he had done; and "Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her."‡ So, likewise, when Laban gave his daughters to Jacob, he merely gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast.§ The modern Jews, indeed, have a religious ceremony connected with their weddings, but this would seem to be in imitation of the Christian custom. A tabernacle, or tent, is erected in a room of the bride's house, draped with shawls and other articles of her trousseau. Beneath the canopy are placed the chests containing her wardrobe, while the youthful pair stand at the entrance, the bride on the right of the bridegroom, and their mothers beside them. In front, two tall candlesticks are lighted, and the officiating rabbi, after throwing an ample white veil over the bride and groom, repeats a certain formula, then presents a cup of wine to them, and when they have tasted it, he dashes the glass to pieces on the floor. This ceremony is, however, dispensed with, we believe, in the marriage of widows.

Among the Muslims there is, properly speaking, no marriage ceremony. The utterance of the single sentence, "I give my-

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* Perkins, p. 235.

† Tobit, vii., 14.

‡ Gen. xxiv., 66, 67.

§ Gen. xxix., 22.

self up to thee," by a woman to a man who proposes to marry her, even without the presence of witnesses, constitutes her his legal wife.* The Circassians and other heathen tribes seem to think that possession is nine points of the law; after the contract or bargain (for it is a sale) is concluded, the maiden is carried off by her purchaser, or one of his friends, and is at once installed mistress of his house, certain mystical rites alone being performed for the purpose of driving away evil spirits.†

The foregoing account will throw light upon some incidents of that interesting parable of our Lord—the Ten Virgins.‡ The foolish virgins were evidently the friends of the bride, who failed of being prepared to meet the bridegroom in a suitable manner. While they went to purchase oil, the procession was formed and moved, not to the church, as is the custom of Christians, but to the house of the bridegroom, as do the Muslims, Jews, and other sects, and as did the Jews in the days of our Saviour. The door was then shut, in order to avoid the danger arising from violent men, who might make an irruption, rob and carry off jewelry, costly garments, and even the bride herself. Outrages like this were repeatedly done not many years ago by the notorious Janissaries, who refused to give up the unfortunate bride until a heavy ransom was paid for her release. The tardy virgins who, anxious to join in the concluding festivities of the wedding, finally came crying, "Lord,



Ancient Terra-cotta Lamps and Oil-vessels. (Matt. xxv., 4.)

Lord, open to us," could not of course be admitted, nor was their cry recognized: "Verily, I say unto you, I know you not," was the response of the wary bridegroom.§ The lamps refer-

* Lane, vol. i., p. 220.
† Spencer, vol. ii., p. 326.
‡ Matt. xxv., 10–12.
§ Matt. xxv., 11, 12.

red to in the first verse of the parable, as well as the oil-vessels (ver. 4), were doubtless the same as are now found in great quantities among the ruins of ancient cities, and for which glass has been substituted in modern times. The form and appearance of those most generally met with are illustrated by the preceding picture.

A man newly married is not expected to go forth on a military expedition, and his relations and friends by common consent relieve him, as far as possible, from any heavy task, and seek to lighten his burden of care. When traveling once in a mountainous region with a company of men, a distribution of burdens was found to be necessary, each one carrying his own share. A young man of the party begged off, on the ground that he had been married a fortnight before; his plea was admitted at once, and he trudged along empty-handed. This is in exact accordance with the Mosaic regulation on the subject;* which, however, also extended to a simple betrothal without the consummation of marriage.†

We should now like to proceed at once with a description of the growth of the family from this, its incipient formation. But there are developments of human folly and passion, derived too often, alas! from mistaken views of life, which mar the picture; and these must be introduced, if we would give a truthful impression of Oriental life, or faithfully carry out our parallel between the Bible and the modern East. We must speak of marriages contracted for limited periods, of divorce, adultery, concubinage, polygamy, and slavery.

Marriage for limited periods must be distinguished from those which are limited by divorce, as the former are contracted for a definite time previously agreed upon by the parties. They are mostly confined to the Muslims of Persia, who belong to the Sheite sect, and are thought to be derived from an old Arabian custom, tolerated by Mohammed, but abrogated by his successor, Omar, whose authority the Sheites do not acknowledge. In entering upon this strange relation, the parties agree to live together for a fixed period, which varies from a few days to ninety-nine years, and the contract is regularly drawn up by the cadi, or judge, and duly signed by witnesses.‡ This prac-

* Deut. xxiv., 5. † Deut. xx., 7. ‡ Malcolm, "Persia," vol. ii., p. 428.

tice is confined to the transient residents of large cities, particularly merchants, who find these temporary connections more convenient for their business than permanent ones, as the removal of families is thus superseded; and the women who enter upon such relations are deemed of good repute.* Some of the Armenian and Georgian Christians, who reside in Tebriz and Teheran, have been led by this evil example to the adoption of similar practices.

But the frequency of divorce is the most common cause of the brief duration of the marriage contract. The Jews deem it sufficient to "write a bill of divorcement," and dismiss their wives for the most trifling cause. The law of Moses allows divorce in case the husband "find some uncleanness in his wife."† Before New Testament times, the Shammai (School of Interpretation) understood this "uncleanness" to mean some infamous action. But the later school of Hillel introduced the practice of divorcing at will, which was common in the days of our Saviour,‡ and still prevails among the Jews, rendering the condition of their women sad in the extreme; and this is further aggravated by denying to the wife the power to divorce her husband under any circumstances.§ We may infer that such was not the purpose or intent of the Mosaic law, from the fact that it specifies the cases in which divorce is at all allowable, and utterly forbids it in other cases.‖

A similar state of things exists among the Muslims, where divorce takes place with, if possible, still greater facility; for a husband can put away his wife at will, and without cause, by simply saying, "I divorce thee." He must, however, pay her dowry. But, unlike what occurs in the case of the Jew,¶ he can take her back if he chooses, even without her consent, provided it be within a limited period, unless he has divorced her three times, or repeated thrice in succession the above-mentioned sentence, in which case she can be his only after marrying another man.** The wife, however, can not obtain a divorce except by application to the judge, and for a cause which he shall deem sufficient. As might be expected, divorces are common. They would be far more so were it not for the

* Perkins, p. 294. † Deut. xxiv., 1–4. ‡ Matt. v., 32.
§ Prideaux, vol. iv., p. 299. ‖ Deut. xxii., 19, 29.
¶ Deut. xxiv., 3, 4. ** Lane, vol. i., p. 124.

children, who constitute a common bond between the parents; for parental affection is one of the strongest passions of the Orientals.

As a matter of fact, the actual cause of divorce is not adultery, a crime punishable with death when detected,* which, however, rarely occurs. The usual causes of divorce are a bad temper, or extravagance in the wife, and the cruel treatment or neglect of the husband. As the latter is not obliged to pay the wife's dowry when she sues for divorce, he often treats her so badly as to compel her to appeal to the judge for deliverance. We have known a man, not forty years of age, who had successively married and put away a dozen wives, having devoured the substance of each in turn, and compelled her to seek a divorce on the ground of utter neglect. Others have known men who had married twenty, thirty, or even more wives, in the course of ten years, and some who were in the habit of taking a new wife every month. Women, too, not far advanced in age are sometimes met with who have been married to a dozen men in succession.†

It is far otherwise with the Christian sects. Instead of following the Mosaic law, or rather a perversion of it by the traditions of the elders,‡ like the Jews and the Muslims, they adopt an exaggerated version of the Gospel rule, holding that the marriage tie, under any circumstances, can not be dissolved by divorce. Cases of manifest adultery form no exception, the parties being separated only for a time, and an erring wife being sometimes confined to the house of the priest, there to be duly watched over and admonished. The innocent party can not contract another marriage. They must be reconciled, and try to live together in peace.§ The effects of this system are decidedly pernicious. It is an exaggeration of the Gospel principle respecting marriage, just as is the rule of

* Lev. xx., 10. † John iv., 18; Lane, vol. i., p. 231.

‡ Matt. v., 31; Mark x., 4–12.

§ A number of cases, however, have occurred in which a husband, having changed his religion, his wife has been taken from him, usually with her own consent, by the priests, and married to another man. With the Turks the practice is, of course, common, for they hold to loose views on the subject. A somewhat parallel case is that of Samson's Philistine wife, who was taken from him and given to his companion, to create enmity between them (Judg. xiv., 20). Still more in point are the cases referred to by Paul in 1 Cor. vii., 15.

the Oriental clergy never to take an oath. They swear in private, but would cease to be venerated by their people if they took an oath before a magistrate. Yet it is clear that the practice of the Christians respecting marriage exerts a far better influence upon their morals than that adopted by the Jews and Muslims.

Adultery, according to Muslim law, is punishable with death by the stoning of both parties;* the guilty *man*, however, is not punished if he be unmarried, and, since four witnesses are required to prove the crime, conviction is extremely rare, especially as, in case of failure to substantiate the charge, the accuser is doomed to receive eighty stripes, and his testimony is never again admitted in a court of justice.† Seldom, however, do men receive any kind of punishment for this crime, while a common fate of the adulteress is to be tied up in a bag and drowned.

Polygamy is generally acknowledged, even by those who practice it, to be neither favorable to morality nor conducive to the happiness of the community. Fortunately it is restricted to comparatively few, whose great wealth allows them to avail themselves of the sanctioned license of maintaining several wives.‡ Merchants and others who live by their own industry may occasionally have two or three wives, but the practice is chiefly confined to the officers of government, whether in the military or civil service, or in the legal or clerical professions. We shall not here pause to consider the life led by the inmates of the harim, but content ourselves with describing the influence of polygamy upon Oriental society in general.

Polygamy was probably practiced among the Hebrews to the same extent as now among the Muslims. Their kings, from David down, have had their harims.§ They also kept eunuchs.‖ And though the generality of the people were doubtless monogamous, yet we find occasional allusions in the Scriptures to the existence of polygamy among the wealthier

* Lev. xx., 10; John viii., 4, 5. † Koran, chap. xxiv., ver. 4–9.

‡ Niebuhr, p. 65.

§ 2 Sam. v., 13; 1 Kings xi., 3; 1 Chron. vii., 4; 2 Chron. xi., 21.

‖ 2 Kings viii., 6 (marg.); ix., 32; xxiv., 11 (marg.); 1 Chron. xxviii., 1 (marg.); 2 Chron. xviii., 8.

class.* They had, indeed, spent a considerable time in Egypt, where the practice was unknown.† But it was inherited by the entire Abrahamic race, from the patriarch himself, who brought it from Mesopotamia; and, whatever may have been the practice of the Hebrews in Egypt, they certainly reverted to polygamy on their return to Canaan. It was less prevalent after the captivity simply because the people were poor and oppressed; for Josephus informs us that Herod the Great had nine wives living at the same time;‡ and we find a reference to its common practice in apostolic times.§

Polygamy can not, however, be said to have been encouraged or even sanctioned by the Mosaic law; for the "mind of the Spirit" on the subject is clearly shown in utterances like that found in Lev. xviii., 18, which most commentators explain as a distinct prohibition of polygamy. Circumstances, however, rendered it impracticable to bring about a reformation at this time; but polygamy was regulated, and its evils mitigated.‖ The pernicious effects of the system are now found to be essentially the same as those so graphically described in Holy Writ; contentions, envyings, jealousies, and quarrels among the wives,¶ as well as between the different sets of children.**

Not many years ago there was a Druse family residing on Mount Lebanon, consisting of two wives, or rather widows of an old sheikh. The elder wife had an only son, who died, leaving her a most promising grandson, on whom she fondly doted, and who, according to law, inherited most of his grandfather's estate. Now, the younger wife had three sons, each of whom must be content with a small share of the remainder. After the death of the old sheikh, it soon became evident that the young grandson would not be left to the undisturbed enjoyment of his rightful inheritance. The eldest son of the second wife, a fiery, jealous youth, the senior of his nephew only by a year or two, was vexed and indignant at his gentle young

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* Gen. iv., 19; Deut. xxi., 15; Judg. viii., 30; 1 Sam. i., 2; 1 Chron. iv., 5; viii., 8.

† Wilkinson, vol. i., p. 5; vol. ii., p. 224.

‡ "Antiquities," bk. xvii., chap. i., § 3. § 1 Tim. iii., 2.

‖ Mark x., 4, 5. ¶ Gen. xxx., 1–15; 1 Sam. i., 6–8.

** Gen. xxv., 28; xxvii., 1–42; xxxvii., 18–24; 2 Sam. xiii., 19, 20, 28, 29; 1 Kings i., 5–53.

rival on account of his good fortune. Instigated and stimulated by his wicked mother, he began to seek the life of the lad. First, poison was tried, but failed; then, when they were both old enough to join in the game of the *jerid*, he attempted to accomplish his purpose by striking furiously at the boy with his spear, when only the timely interference of friends prevented a fatal issue. After this he gave up covert dealing, and determined to gain his end by one bold stroke. Carefully loading his pistol, he one day strode into the apartment of his father's elder wife, where her grandson was seated quietly beside her, and deliberately shot him dead. He then fled, and secreted himself for some time. Meanwhile the heart-broken grandmother died, and ere long it was intimated to the murderer that the displeasure of the relatives was appeased, and he might return and take possession of his wickedly acquired inheritance.*

It has been asserted by some that there are two sides to the question of polygamy and concubinage, which, as they claim, tend to prevent the licentiousness which prevails where they do not exist. Our own observation, however, does not support such a theory. Nowhere do the crimes against nature specified in Rom. i. prevail to a greater extent than where polygamy and concubinage are allowed. Still more significant is the fact that these vile practices are almost exclusively confined to Muslims, and especially to those among them who possess populous harims. It appears to have been the same anciently. The testimony of profane history is unequivocal, and so is that of Scripture.

It is also worthy of notice that anciently, as now, harlots were a recognized and numerous class.† We are told of Rahab, the harlot of Jericho, whose house was on the city wall, where she could watch the arrival of strangers, and lay her snares for them;‡ of Tamar, who waited "openly by the wayside,"§ as is now done in Egypt, and indeed wherever the population is largely Muslim.‖ The signs of a harlot were as evident then as now, for they decked themselves in gaudy attire, and went about unveiled,¶ singing and dancing in the

* 2 Sam. xiv., 21, 22.

† E. D. Clarke, "Travels" (in 1801), chap. xi., p. 210. ‡ Josh. ii., 1.

§ Gen. xxxviii., 13–23. ‖ 1 Kings iii., 16; Matt. xxi., 31.

¶ Pococke, vol. i., pp. 49, 60.

streets,* and decoying the foolish into the snares they laid for them.†

The practice of polygamy, combined with the concubinage of slaves, certainly exerts a more subtle and pernicious influence than is generally supposed. It perverts the relations of the sexes and separates them, thus depriving each of the wholesome influence of intercourse with the other. Promiscuous assemblies of men and women are unknown; and even when a crowd collects to see some sight or gaze at a show, the sexes are always grouped in two distinct and separate portions. A man never walks in the street by the side of his wife or daughter, but, when he happens to be out in their company, is sure to keep several paces in advance of them. In speaking of his wife he calls her *his house*, and in conversation with other men prefixes to the word "woman," "wife," or "daughter" (whenever he has occasion to allude to either), the phrase "I beg your pardon," just as politeness requires him to do before mentioning the words garlic, onion, a donkey, or a hog. When a man is absent, and writes to his family, he does not address his letter to his wife, but to his son, though his son may be a babe in his mother's lap. It is death to a woman, in some parts of the country, willingly to remain unveiled in the presence of a stranger.‡ The Christians and other monogamous sects alone permit it, and even *their* women hide their faces from the Muslims, knowing the ideas of the latter upon the subject. No man would dare enter a harim without first warning the inmates of his approach by calling with a loud voice. According to the law of the Koran, the persons before whom women are "not required to restrain their eyes, preserve their modesty, hide their ornaments (except what is unavoidable), not to throw a veil over their bosoms, nor show their attractions, are their husbands, fathers, husband's fathers, or husband's sons, their brothers, or their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, or women, or their slaves or eunuchs;" and before all others they are even forbidden to make a noise (as they walk) with their ankle-rings.§ A woman may remain unveiled before her own or her husband's slave, and there is no impropriety in his going

* Isa. xxiii., 16; Lane, vol. ii., p. 86–92.
† Judg. xvi., 1, 16–21; Prov. vii., 10–22.
‡ Perkins, p. 288.
§ Koran, chap. xxiv., 31; comp. Isa. iii., 16.

into any part of the house.* This may explain the circumstances in which Joseph was placed in the house of Potiphar.† In some parts of the country, and even among the Christians, a woman may not show herself unveiled before her father-in-law, and even before her own husband. She never speaks to the former except through a third person, and should he ask her a question, she must whisper her answer to some one who will repeat it aloud to him. Indeed a newly-married woman is not allowed to speak above a whisper for several years, and even wears a handkerchief bound around her mouth until her mother-in-law bids her dispense with it.

Oriental women are, as a class, remarkably industrious and thrifty. They have the entire charge of the housekeeping, the daughters and daughters-in-law bearing the chief burden, and they wait upon their husbands and fathers even when there are plenty of servants and slaves. Neither they nor the children can sit in his presence without his special invitation.‡ They perform all manner of menial services for him, light his pipe, make and serve his coffee, "minister to him at his meals, setting on meat," and pouring water upon his hands, and even washing his feet.§ He eats in solitary dignity, or in company perhaps with his older sons, after which the women retire to another room to partake of their meal with the younger children. Among the Nestorians, and in some other parts of the country, the husband does not call his wife by her own proper name, but by that of her father; for instance, if the father be called Abraham, he addresses her, "thou daughter of Abraham."‖ In country districts the women often till the ground and tend the flocks just like the men.¶ It frequently happens that the husband engages in business that calls him away from his family. He sometimes owns mules, camels, or asses, which he lets to travelers or merchants, and accompanies the caravan to take care of them, being thus constantly on the move, and rarely visiting home. Sometimes he seeks his fortune, or at least his livelihood, in one of the large cities, being absent for years at a time, and sending his earnings to his family. Meantime, however, the women are not idle. They

* Lane, vol. i., p. 224. † Gen. xxxix., 11. ‡ Gen. xxxi., 35.
§ Matt. viii., 15; xxvii., 55; 2 Kings iii., 11; Luke vii., 44.
‖ Perkins, p. 316. ¶ Spencer, vol. ii., p. 209.

cultivate their little field, and raise wheat while the girls lead the sheep or the goats to the pasture; and though no supplies may arrive from the absent husband or father, they manage by economy and thrift to make a living. Even under ordinary circumstances, the women are frequently engaged in outdoor work, weeding or picking the cotton, pruning the vines, gathering the grapes, olives, or other fruits, putting the sickle to the grain, and helping to bring in the harvest. Mothers take their cradles, with their infants in them, upon their shoulders in the morning to the distant field or vineyard, and so the little one lies bound in its place all day long, visited now and then and nursed by the mother, who is at work near by, and at sunset it is again borne on her shoulders to its home. Women may often be seen carrying loads of brush-wood upon their back, and to them belongs the task of preparing and drying manure into cakes of fuel for the winter's consumption. Theirs also is the work of filling the jars of water at the fountain, as already described, page 43.*



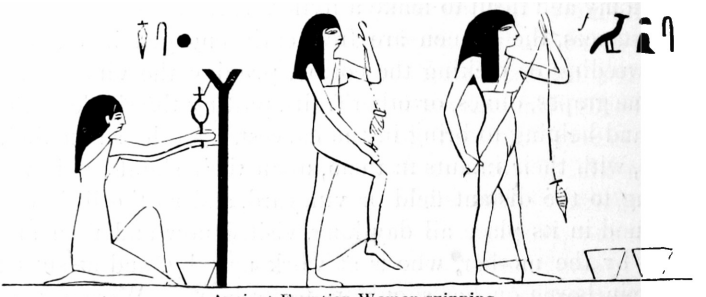
(1) Ancient and (2) modern Egyptian Mode of carrying little Children. (Isa. xlix., 22.)

In Egypt the invariable mode of carrying little children is astride upon their mother's left shoulder. There is an interesting picture on a Khorsabad slab, of a procession of prisoners of both sexes, among whom is a woman carrying a child in the manner we have described; she also wears the fringed blanket, or haram, over her head and left shoulder, like the Egyptian women of the present day.†

Women of the higher class, however, particularly in the large cities, spend most of their time within doors. They occupy themselves with the care of their households, and with needlework and fine embroidery, the latter being wrought in a frame supported by four legs, like a small table, which is placed in

* Perkins, pp. 102, 319, 320; Layard, vol. i., p. 156. † Bonomi, p. 207.

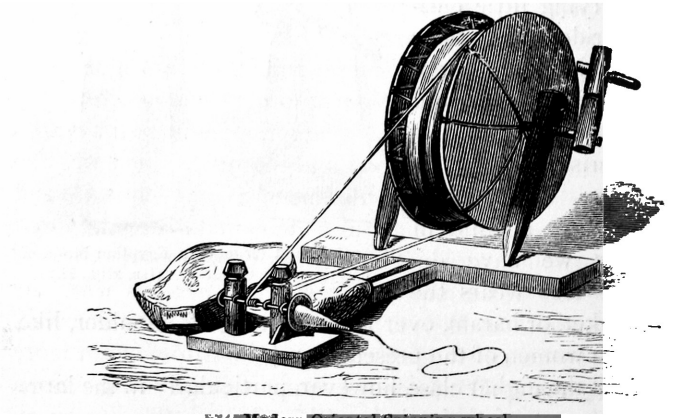
front of the fair worker as she sits in Oriental fashion upon the divan. Others, like Solomon's thrifty housewife,* and like the women portrayed in the ancient sculptures of Egypt, engage in



Ancient Egyptian Women spinning.

spinning wool, cotton, flax, silk, or goat's hair; busily ply the loom, with which many households are still supplied, and clothe their families with stuffs of home manufacture. They knit woolen socks, in striped and figured patterns, or stockings, often exquisitely fine, of the silky Angora goat's hair, worn by ladies of wealth and rank.

There is no disrepute attached to manual labor, and men of



Modern Oriental Spinning-wheel.

wealth and high position do not hesitate to engage in it. Such persons may sometimes be seen plowing or digging with their

* Prov. xxxi., 13–24.

own hands, or engaged in doing the work of a mason, or some other handicraft; indeed one of the laws of the Osmanli empire requires every sultan to learn a trade, and occasionally work at it. It is the pampered sons of the state officials alone who, being brought up in luxury and self-indulgence, spend a life of sloth, until some reverse of fortune compels them to work off their monstrous corpulency by engaging in some useful labor.



Oriental Distaff. (Exod. xxxv., 25.)

The patriarchal system is still retained in Oriental households. When the sons marry, they bring their wives into the family, and in many cases even the sons-in-law take up their abode with their wives' parents,* so that the home circle is continually on the increase till the death of the father and of the mother, when there is but one wife, after which the property is divided, and the sons separate. It is worthy of note that, as a general rule, there are more children in monogamous families than in others, though in polygamous households the sum total is larger, including slaves who are not identified by ties of blood and interest. Such was the family of Abraham, during the lifetime of Sarah—one wife and one child—yet it was so numerous as to contain three hundred and eighteen trained servants born in his own house.† Jacob's family, however, was composed of seventy persons when he took up his abode in Egypt, not one of whom was a slave.‡ We have known a single Christian household to contain more than seventy souls, all descended from a single pair. Such households have all things in common. Each one brings of his earnings to fill the common purse. Sometimes one of the younger sons, finding he can do little or nothing toward maintaining the family, or not being satisfied to occupy an inferior

* Gen. ii., 24. † Gen. xiv., 14. ‡ Gen. xlvi., 27.

position, and having no control over property, seeks to better his lot by departing to some prosperous city, or more favored land. This was the case with the Prodigal Son;* and his father's treatment of him, as well as his reply to the murmuring son (ver. 20–31), seem very natural to Orientals. There seems to be no difficulty in controlling so large a family; respect for the aged and for their superiors seems to be inherent in the constitution of this people, and exercises a powerful influence over their minds. The younger look up to their elders, and all pay the utmost deference to their common patriarch, and hold in equal, if not greater, esteem his aged spouse. Devotion to the mother is certainly a striking characteristic of the inhabitants of the whole Asiatic continent. The sultan, it is said, rules the country, but is himself the slave of his mother; and Abdool Mejid clearly pointed out the secret cause when he exclaimed, at her dying bedside, "She is my only true friend."

Slavery has existed in the East from time immemorial. It was a recognized institution in the days of Abraham, two thousand years before Christ.† The oldest writings of heathen authors and the most ancient monuments represent it as an existing institution. War was, doubtless, both the first cause and the ever-fertile source of slavery, for the theory of the Asiatics has always been, and continues to be, that the conqueror has a right to the life and the property of the conquered; so that the men are mercilessly put to the sword, while the women and children are reduced to slavery.‡ Another source of slavery was the law concerning debt, now no longer in force, which allowed the creditor to sell his debtor and his family, and thus to obtain the payment of his claim.§ The votaries of Islam have, from the time of Mohammed, been almost constantly warring against neighboring nations, thus supplying their harims with women, and their houses with servants. But the last century saw their progress effectually arrested, so that there was a great demand for slaves, when the Greek revolution (1821–'27) came in to replenish the market. That unhappy classic land was well-nigh drained of its inhabitants when, for six long years, it was devastated with fire and sword by ruthless hordes

* Luke xv., 12, 13. † Comp. Gen. ix., 25; xv., 2; xxiv., 2.
‡ Gen. xxxiv., 25; 2 Chron. xxix., 9; Josephus, "Antiquities," bk. vi., chap. 9.
§ 2 Kings iv., 1: Matt. xviii.. 25.

of Turks; and many Greek women still live in the harims of the murderers of their fathers and brothers. During all this period the supply of negro slaves had been obtained by frequent raids into the interior portions of Africa; for, by the adoption of European improvements in warfare, they were enabled to butcher the men, and carry off the women and children, with little or no loss to themselves; and since hostilities have ceased with Christian nations, they have obtained their white slaves from Georgia and Circassia, where the parents, both Muslim and heathen, are found willing to sell their children to the highest bidder for the sake of the price they obtain. Their ancestors also sold their children to the Persians.* Parents were also allowed to sell their children by the law of Moses.† The white slave-girls, whether Circassian or Georgian, are highly esteemed for their beauty and temper, and the price they bring in the market varies from one hundred and fifty to five hundred dollars, and even more; whereas that of the black girls, whether of the Galla or other African tribes, never rises above one hundred and fifty dollars, even when they are good cooks; for they are generally employed as menials.‡ The late exodus of several hundred thousand Circassian families, who have been driven from their country by the Russian Government, and have taken refuge in Asia Minor, has reduced the price of slaves of that race lower than it was ever known before; and we have ourselves heard of some children being sold for four shillings apiece.§

The power of the master over his slaves is unbounded. He may even wantonly put them to death. He may give them away as any other property, and may marry them to whom he pleases.‖ On the other hand, the slave enjoys certain immunities or privileges which are denied to the free servant. In case of an offense, his punishment is but half that of others, and even less.¶ Female slaves are usually kept as concubines, whether the master be married or not.** But when they become mothers, the children are free if he acknowledge them as

* Herodotus, bk. iii., chap. 97.

† Exod. xxi., 7; Lev. xxv., 39; Smith, vol. i., p. 242; Tavernier, p. 131; Ussher, p. 63.

‡ Lane, vol. i., p. 234.

§ "Travels in Asia Minor," vol. i., pp. 44, 45.

‖ Exod. xxi., 20, 21.

¶ Lev. xix., 20.

** 2 Sam. v., 13.

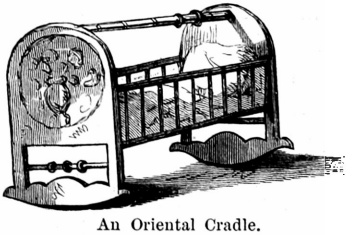
his own, and the mother is regarded as essentially his wife.* She is thus, in fact, emancipated; for the law does not allow a free man to marry a slave woman. A Christian or Jew is not allowed to keep a Muslim concubine; but a Muslim may have one of any religion.† The husband has no power over his wife's slaves, and can not treat them as concubines without incurring the penalty he would suffer if they belonged to any one else. Sometimes, though seldom, their mistress permits them to become her husband's concubines, and their children are, in such a case, legitimate; otherwise they are the slaves of the wife.‡ This explains the position of Hagar toward Sarah, her mistress,§ as well as the conduct of Leah and Rachel toward their slaves, Zilpah and Bilhah.‖ The student of the Bible can compare the Mosaic law with these regulations by examining the texts we have adduced.

Orientals rejoice exceedingly over the birth of a *son*, for he is not only to perpetuate the memory of his father, but is expected to be the support and defense of his mother and of the rest of the family, in a country where unprotected woman is most cruelly oppressed, and the widow and the fatherless even of the wealthiest are often reduced to penury and want. The same feeling existed among the Hebrews. Hagar despised her mistress as soon as she found herself the mother of a son.¶ When the hated Leah had given birth to Jacob's first-born she rejoiced, saying, "Now, therefore, will my husband love me."** And when she had borne him six sons, she exclaimed, "God hath endued me with a good dowry: now will my husband dwell with me."†† When there are several wives, their rivalry for the affections of the husband is often great; and, much depending upon the birth and life of a son, the latter not unfrequently falls a victim to the intrigues of the less favored wives, usually by means of poison — an occurrence sufficiently common to attract little notice.

There has been no change in the practice of obstetrics from the time of Pharaoh, whether in Egypt or in neighboring lands. Many of the women, especially in the country, suffer little from parturition; they go to the bath on the second or third day,

* Gen. xxv., 6.
† Lane, vol. i., p. 128.
‡ Ibid., vol. i., p. 233.
§ Gen. xvi., 1–4.
‖ Gen. xxx., 3–9.
¶ Gen. xvi., 4, 11.
** Gen. xxix., 32.
†† Gen. xxx., 20.

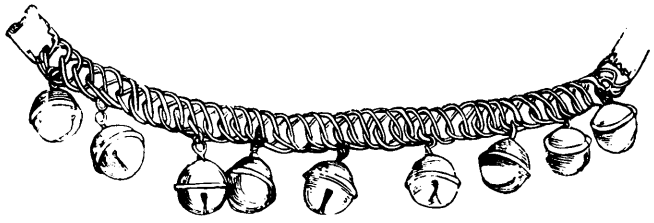
and assume their accustomed tasks on the day following. It is not an uncommon thing for a peasant's wife, when working as usual in the vineyard, to step aside behind a rock or a shrub, give birth to a child, and carry it home in the evening slung behind her back.* Thus did the midwives say to Pharaoh, "The Hebrew women are lively" (*i. e.*, full of life, strong), "and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them."† And the fact that there were but two midwives to attend to the Hebrew families which eighty years later must have numbered more than a million souls, was a strong corroboration of the statement. As in Europe not very long ago, so still in Asia, the prejudices of the people forbid a male physician to attend a woman at such a time; even her own husband must keep out of the way. Midwives alone are allowed to aid nature, and their mode is universally that which is alluded to in Exod. i., 16. Their relations to the family naturally become of a very intimate character. It is they who treat all the ailments of the women and children, a doctor being seldom summoned for them; and some of these midwives are in the habit of administering to young infants the poison of serpents and other reptiles, whereby they are rendered proof against the venom of those creatures for life, somewhat as vaccination is used for the purpose of warding off the small-pox. As soon as the babe is born it is washed in *salted* water,‡ clothed and swathed in a long bandage, or "swaddling-cloth,"§ three or four inches wide, and about ten feet long, which is firmly wound around it from the neck downward, including the arms, which are thus pinioned to its sides, so that it can stir neither hand nor foot. This is done with the idea of keeping the tender bones motionless in a proper position until they acquire sufficient strength to be allowed to move about. It is, moreover, easier for the mother to carry the little one on her arm or slung on her back. The cradle is low, and rocks readily to and fro



An Oriental Cradle.

* Morier, vol. ii., p. 106; Hermer, vol. iv., p. 434.
† Exod. i., 19.
‡ Ezek. xvi., 4.
§ Luke ii., 7.

by the simple pulling of a string fastened to its side, while large rings of glass or metal, strung upon a transverse stick, amuse the child with their jingle. The little one lies tightly bound in its cradle day and night, being taken up once or twice in twenty-four hours. Its mother leans over the cradle to nurse it, and hushes its cries by incessant rocking: all night long lying in her bed, spread upon the floor close by, she never lets go the cradle-string. When the child begins to creep or walk about with uncertain steps, little anklets, consisting of silver chains, or bands, hung with tiny bells, are fastened around its ankles, and their constant tinkling announces to the mother the whereabouts of her child.



Bells fastened to a Child's Ankle.

The circumcision of their children is accomplished among the Jews on the eighth day, as enjoined upon Abraham.* The practice has existed in Egypt from very ancient times, as attested by Herodotus,† and proved by the mummies. The arbitrary nature of the ceremony would, however, favor the idea that it was derived from the Hebrews, and was also adopted by the Abyssinians, as asserted by themselves. No mention is made of circumcision in the Koran.‡ It existed among the Arabs from time immemorial, being probably handed down to them by their father, Ishmael; and as the latter was thirteen years old at the time of his circumcision,§ the Arabs apply the rite to their sons at that age,‖ but other Muslims between the ages of six and sixteen, or about the time they are able to repeat intelligently the profession of faith, "There is no God but God, and Mohammed is the apostle of God." The Jews and the Muslims, therefore, may be said to occupy positions with regard to circumcision similar to those held by Pædobaptists

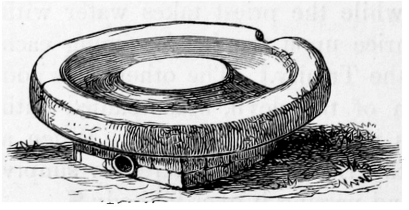
* Gen. xvii., 12.
† Bk. ii., chap. 104.
‡ Sale, Koran, "Prel. Dis.," § 4, p. 76.
§ Gen. xvii., 25.
‖ Josephus, "Antiquities," bk. i., chap. xii., § 2.

and by Baptists, respectively, concerning the Christian ordinance of baptism. Baptism is administered among Eastern Christians as early after birth as practicable; a church festival is often selected, particularly the anniversary of our Lord's baptism, or of his crucifixion.* There is usually a room in the church, called the baptistry, where the rite is performed. Among the Nestorians, who have kept themselves the most free from innovations, baptism is administered as follows: the child is divested of its clothing, and anointed on the head and the breast, in the form of a cross, with consecrated oil, poured from a horn in which it is kept for the purpose. This is said to be done in imitation of the anointing of kings and prophets in the Old Testament;† and the practice is supposed to be countenanced by the words of the apostle: "He hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father."‡ It is needless, perhaps, to remark that, like the Church of Rome, most Eastern Christians believe that the anointing with oil secures the influences of the Holy Spirit, while the baptismal water removes the taint of original sin, a fact which explains why no one, not even its mother, ever kisses the infant before its baptism, after which it is said to have become a Christian. After the application of the oil, the Nestorians plunge the child up to its neck in a vessel of tepid water, salted with salt,§ and it is thus held by a deacon, while the priest takes water with both hands and pours it thrice upon the head, naming each time one of the persons of the Trinity.‖ The other sects add to this a form of exorcism of the devil, accompanied with blowing from the mouth, as if to blow him away. When a babe appears to be dying, the rite is administered by simply dipping the hand in water and passing it over its body.¶

Baptism is sometimes administered to adults being converts from Judaism or from the faith of Islam. We have known several such, of both sexes, who were received into the Armenian Church, though the occurrence is by no means common. In such cases the same form is used, the candidate wearing for the occasion a simple cloth around the waist. The practice is not to dip the entire person under water, but to cause the neo-

* Rom. vi., 3. † 1 Kings xix., 15, 16, etc. ‡ Rev. i., 6.
§ Mark ix., 49. ‖ Perkins, p. 455. ¶ Pococke, vol. i., p. 247.

phyte to sit, kneel, or stand in it, while the water is poured three times upon his or her head. This appears to be a very old custom, handed down from an early period in the history of the Christian Church. There is at Nice a church of great antiquity, though not, as some have claimed, the same building as that in which the famous Nicene Council was held, but must have been erected near that time, as is proved by the cathedra, or seat, the semicircular steps at the end, and the mosaic pavement. In the vestibule of this church is an old fresco painting, representing the baptism of Constantine in the manner we have described. But older yet is the baptismal font lying among the ruins of Ephesus, which affords a strong confirmation of the antiquity of this mode of administering the ordinance. Pococke, who saw it in 1739, gives a sufficiently accurate drawing of it; but he acknowledges that "it lies on the ground which has grown up around it, though doubtless it was originally somewhat raised," so that the portion of the structure which supported the basin was out of sight. He further describes it as fifteen feet in diameter, of red and white marble (Brescia), "shaped within in a particular manner, something like that of St. Victor at Marseilles, and doubtless once used for sacrifices, though they have a tradition that St. John baptized in it.* Since Pococke's day the base has been uncovered; it consists of a brick foundation having two pipes, the one doubtless for bringing water, the other for conveying it away. It is a basin of circular shape with a raised portion, also circular, in the centre, about five feet in diameter. This portion is several inches lower than the outer rim of the basin, and is surrounded by a trough six inches in depth. Thus, if we suppose this basin used for baptismal purposes, the officiating minister might stand in the centre of the font where the water was shallow, while the neophyte stood or knelt by his side.



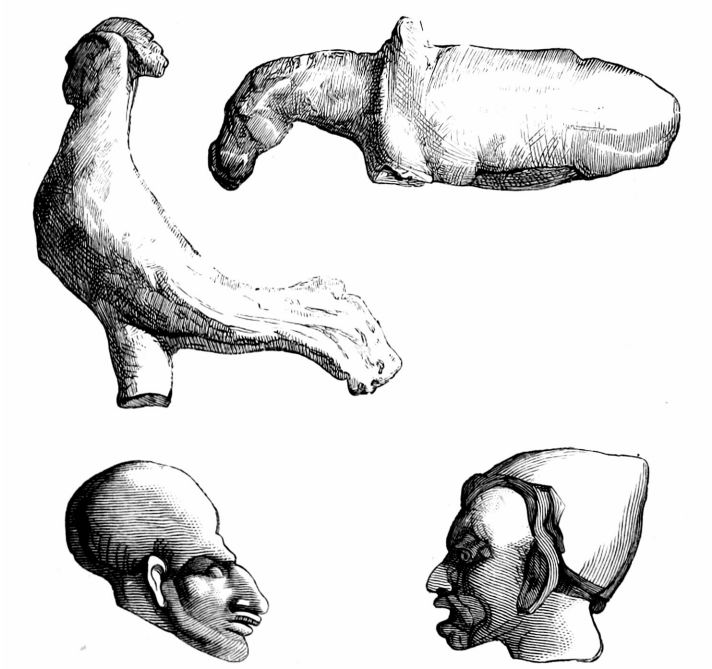
Ancient baptismal Font at Ephesus.

The law of Moses gave the eldest son an inheritance twice

* Pococke, vol. iii., p. 50.

as large as that of the other children.* But Mohammed, wishing to put an end to the divisions that existed among the Arabians, annulled this custom, which then prevailed among them, and provided that the sons should receive equal portions, and the daughters half as much as the sons. The ancient practice, however, still prevails among the Arabs of the Desert, and the Druses of Mount Lebanon and the Hourán.

The games of children are pretty nearly the same the world over. Wilkinson has described some of the toys of the ancient Egyptians, found among the ruins and tombs of that remarkable land.† Similar remains are found in various parts of Western Asia, the more graceful being the work of the



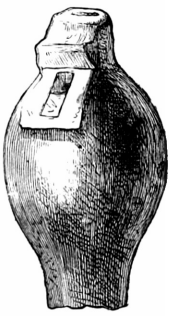
Children's ancient Terra-cotta Toys.

Greek race and of their nearest neighbors in the western part of the peninsula. Sardis, the capital of Lydia, was celebrated of old for its manufactures of children's toys, as Nuremberg is

* Deut. xxi., 17.

† Vol. i., p. 196, etc.

in Germany now. In that same region a great variety of articles in terra cotta are found, exhibiting no little taste in the imitation of nature's models. Miniature horses, cattle, dogs, fish, chickens, lions, and deer, an ass with its pack-saddle, dolls with arms and legs that could be moved by the pulling of a string, comic figures or caricatures of hunchbacks, deformed negroes, satyrs, and idiots; also whistles, marbles, and many other things in a sufficiently good state of preservation, which compare well with similar products of our modern civilization. The religion of Islam, indeed, forbids such representations now, yet it can not prevent little girls playing with dolls, nor boys amusing themselves with mimic horses, sheep, or carts; nor both from eating the sugar birds, horses, and men of the candy-seller, himself a Muslim. A similar state of things existed, doubtless, among the Hebrews; but though the prohibition to make images could not be strictly carried out in the case of children, yet it must have tended, as now, to encourage more active sports.



Ancient Terra-cotta Flageolet.

Children of both sexes attend the same school, remaining under instruction until the age of ten or soon after. The extent of their learning is the committing to memory of the prayers and other formulas required by their religion. Among the Christians such schools are upon the church premises, while with the Muslims they are kept in some room attached to the mosk. Each child, as he enters, leaves his shoes at the door, and then squats down upon the floor, which is sometimes covered with a mat or an old carpet or rug. The teacher sits upon a small mattress, and leans against a cushion. Books are rare. The letters, syllables, and words are written upon a board, and the process of learning is slow and tedious. The scholars study their lesson aloud, and he who makes the most noise is esteemed the best student; and thus the incessant din of the school announces to the passer-by its near vicinity. The teacher is paid by the community, and usually combines the offices both of priest and teacher. He also receives presents occasionally from the parents on feast days, and sometimes on the first day of each week, in order to secure his special attention to their chil-

dren's lessons. The punishments for misdemeanor are complaints to the parents, blows, and especially the bastinado applied to the soles of the feet. Besides these elementary schools, however, there are teachers called "ma'alems," who devote themselves to the higher departments of instruction, being supported by a fund given for that purpose by some pious individual, or by the liberality or munificence of a sovereign. The students live a very simple life. They are mostly too poor to provide for themselves, and are lodged, free of charge, in buildings erected for the purpose, called "mdreseh," which are found in certain cities thus favored, as with us.* A plain meal is furnished them once a day from the college fund. They often enter the service of a teacher, to enjoy better opportunities of instruction by listening to his conversation. This service consists merely in waiting upon him, and the compensation is food, lodging, and the occasional presents of visitors.† The ma'alem lectures or comments on some author, usually in public, and often in the mosk, occupying the pulpit, while the scholars sit cross-legged below. This was probably the manner adopted in the "schools of the prophets" as long as they were countenanced by the kings of Judah and Israel;‡ but they frequently suffered want,§ and were even compelled by persecution to hide in caves of the earth.‖ Such also, in substance, were the schools of Shammai and Hillel, after the return from Babylon; ¶ and thus did Gamaliel teach, in Jerusalem, Paul and others, who literally "sat at his feet."**

The climate of Western Asia is one of the finest in the world, and so varied as to suit every constitution. The slopes of Lebanon, for example, and the plains that lie at its feet, afford within a remarkably small space the greatest variety of temperature, while the dryness of the atmosphere and the gradual changes of heat and cold are highly favorable to health. Undrained marshes, indeed, exist as elsewhere, producing malaria, which renders the surrounding region almost uninhabitable. The localities of this character nearest to Palestine are Alexandretta and Mersin, the nearest ports of Aleppo and Tarsoos; but the existence of these nests of disease is owing to the supineness

* 2 Kings ii., 3, 5. † 1 Kings xix., 21. ‡ 1 Sam. xix., 20.
§ 2 Kings iv., 38. ‖ 1 Kings xviii., 13.
¶ Prideaux, vol. iv., p. 211, etc. ** Acts xxii., 3.

of a government which not only fails to provide for the health of its subjects, but even forbids others to do it.* After all, however, the climate of these lands may be considered one of the healthiest in the world. It is here that man has reached the greatest longevity, not only in the abnormal antediluvian age, but during the succeeding four thousand years. Moses, thirty-two centuries ago, and Solon eight hundred years later, pronounced the ordinary limit of man's age to be "three-score years and ten."† But Terah, the father of Abraham, lived to the age of two hundred and five years in Mesopotamia; and the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob attained to the respective ages of one hundred and seventy-five, one hundred and eighty, and one hundred and forty-seven years; even Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died, "his eye not yet being dim with age nor his natural force abated."‡ Later historians have also mentioned more recent instances, the like of which may be frequently met with at the present time, so that, while seventy is a common age, we have known a number who have lived ninety and a hundred years; there are well-authenticated cases of persons arriving to the ages of one hundred and twenty-five and one hundred and thirty years. There are, indeed, no public records kept either of births or of deaths. But some Christian parents are in the habit of writing these memorials in a Family Bible or some other favorite book; in other cases, the fact is ascertained by the date of some remarkable events, or the reigns of the sultans.

It can not be said that Western Asia is more liable to epidemics than other countries; on the contrary, the great loss of life which history sometimes records is usually attributable to other causes. The instances mentioned in Holy Writ were more or less of a miraculous character, and the natural causes which may have been brought into play evidently acted with unwonted energy. Such were the plagues of Egypt, and such the pestilences which carried off thousands of Israelites in the

* A European gentleman not long since offered to drain the Alexandretta swamp on condition that he be permitted to cultivate the ground thus rescued for a limited number of years, but the Government rejected the offer!

† Psa. xc., 10; Herodotus, bk. i., chap. 32.

‡ Gen. xxv., 7; xxxv., 28; xlvii., 28; Deut. xxxiv., 7.

wilderness or in their own land, whether the second causes were quails, or fiery serpents, or pestilence.* The destruction of Sennacherib's army was probably produced by a simoom, just as has been the case with many armies since that time in regions subject to the same influences and the action of the same causes.† Thus perished many of the soldiers of Cambyses in the deserts of Libya (B.C. 525). The plague which for many years afflicted the Levant was not confined to its limits, but spread all over Europe. Its first appearance in Egypt led to the supposition that it found its origin in some natural cause existing in that country which was latent in ancient times; but the fact that it has now wholly disappeared disproves the correctness of this surmise.‡

Western Asia has suffered much from earthquakes almost from time immemorial, although only one volcano exists in its neighborhood. This is Santorino, whose last great eruption is described by Strabo,§ since which period it has shown no sign of life till quite lately. The volcanoes of the Katakekaumene (a part of Lydia) have long been extinct. But many cities, once prosperous and renowned, have in a moment's time been utterly destroyed by earthquakes, and many of their inhabitants buried under their ruins; chief among these were Antioch, Sardis, and Nicomedia. Constantinople has also suffered severely from the same cause, and the Church of St. Sophia was leveled with the ground, but was afterward rebuilt with greater splendor than before by the Emperor Justinian (A.D. 548). It was, perhaps, by such an agency that the walls of Jericho were miraculously overthrown at the sounding of the trumpets of the Israelites.‖

But the chief cause of the loss of life in these lands, one which has kept down the rapidly increasing population, and turned the most fertile districts into deserts, has been the re-

* Numb. xi., 31; xiv., 37; xvi., 46–48; xxi., 6, etc.; 2 Sam. xxiv., 15.

† 2 Chron. xxxii., 21.

‡ The terrible famine by which many tens of thousands of the population of Persia perished in 1872 proves that those regions are as liable to drought at the present day as they were in the time of Jacob (Gen. xli., 56) and Elijah (1 Kings xviii., 2). Egypt, however, is less subject to this scourge, on account of her being watered by the overflowings of the Nile, which have been brought under more perfect control than they were before Joseph's vizierate.

§ "Geography," bk. i., chap. 16. ‖ Josh. vi., 20.

lentless wars of which they have ever been the theatre. We shall, however, speak at sufficient length on this point when we come to consider the form of civil government which has here exercised sway from the earliest times to the present.

The art of healing has never flourished among these people, and their notions upon this subject are still very crude. Talismans and magic are still in use, while religious ceremonies and vows are greatly relied upon. Herodotus describes a custom among the ancient Babylonians, which he considers the wisest of their institutions. "They have no physicians," says he; "but when a man is ill they lay him in the public square, and the passers-by come to him; and if they have ever had this disease themselves, or have known any one who has suffered from it, they give him advice, and no one is allowed to pass the sick man in silence without asking him what his ailment is."* This is, indeed, an excellent sketch of the state of things at the present day in all parts of the land, excepting that the sick man remains at home. But Herodotus was certainly ignorant of the actual working of the system he so much admired, or he never would have recommended it, for nothing can be more pernicious. Every body has a right to give advice, and indeed one is often compelled to do it on the ground that "he or some of his friends have suffered from the same malady," and been cured in this or that way. The consequence is, that the poor patient is frequently made to swallow a different drug every half-hour, and is consequently dispatched with the greatest possible celerity. Drugs are abundant and cheap. They now form the principal articles of exportation, and have figured largely in the various "World's Exhibitions" held in different parts of Europe. Any one can be a doctor who chooses, and a druggist (akhtar) is so of necessity. Neither study nor diploma is required. The doctor often adds this calling to that of a dervish, and deals largely in charms. He travels about, and when driven from one city by his disappointed patients, flees unto another. When called to the bedside of the sick, his favorite trick is to strike a bargain to cure the sufferer within a given time for a specified sum, secure all he can in advance for drugs, etc., and then drop the case. Dis-

* Herodotus, bk. i., chap. 197.

eases of the eyes and skin are generally prevalent in Egypt, and, to a less degree, in some parts of Arabia and Palestine. This is doubtless owing to the very fine and almost imperceptible sand which fills the atmosphere when the wind blows from the south and south-west. The only water used in Egypt is taken from the Nile, and is charged with soil and vegetable matter, increasing the irritation of the eye to such a degree that the natives never wash an inflamed eye. The same causes are favorable to the increase of vermin, and to the development of diseases of the skin. Some of the latter, of an incurable nature, were peculiar to Egypt; and Moses threatened that they would be sent upon the Israelites if they proved disobedient.* We accordingly meet with these diseases among the Jews at various points in their history.† There is now comparatively little leprosy in the East,‡ owing probably to the influence of the Mosaic regulations, perpetuated by Christianity and Islam. It is, however, worthy of notice that the Jews are, of all the nations of the East, the most generally affected with diseases of the skin, which would seem to be a fulfillment of prophecy.

Some changes have evidently been introduced in the manner of disposing of the dead since the earliest times, but they chiefly relate to the wealthy, for the poor seem to have always been simply buried in the ground. The rich were laid in tombs, similar to what we now call vaults; these were either natural caves,§ or as often excavated or dug out of the rock,‖ or built of hewn stone of various forms; some were even covered over by costly mounds or pyramids. The only stone pyramids of this kind are those still found in Egypt, but many more exist in the same country which are built of baked or sun-dried bricks;¶ the latter are found also at Nineveh, Ooroomia, Tarsoos, and Sardis. There are similar mounds of earth covering the remains of the dead, extending from the plains of the Lower

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* Deut. xxviii., 27, 60; Stanley, "Jewish Church," vol. i., p. 104.

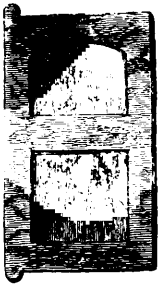
† 2 Kings vii., 8; 2 Chron. xxvi., 21; Matt. x., 8; Luke xvii., 12.

‡ There are a few lepers at Jerusalem, Nabloos, Damascus, and Aleppo. They marry among themselves; their children appear healthy until ten, when the disease appears, and soon covers the whole body.—Léon Paul, p. 44.

§ Gen. xxiii., 19, 20. ‖ Isa. xxii., 16; Matt. xxvii., 60.

¶ Pococke, vol. i., p. 53.

Danube, through the Crimea, Daghestan, the great steppes of Russia, and on to Central Asia, marking the route pursued for many centuries by the migrations of Eastern tribes westward toward Europe. The Greeks and Romans burned their dead, and their tombs, as well as those of cognate races, contain human bones inclosed in vases with charcoal-ashes. The sites of many ancient cities in Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, and that of Jerusalem in particular,* contain an extensive necropolis (city of the dead), consisting of numerous excavations in the neighboring rocks in the form of rooms or vaults with side shelves, upon which the bodies were laid. The entrance is closed by means of a solid door, apparently cut out of the same rock, so as to turn on its prominent points, which fit into holes or sockets above and below.† This will be understood by examining the accompanying sketch of one of the three doors found in the sepulchre of the kings at Jerusalem, where they were intended to close the entrance into the inner rooms of the tomb. This will illustrate the nature of the obstacle which Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome expected to encounter in their attempt to embalm the body of Jesus.‡ The obstacle consisted in the weight of the door, and its closely fitting the door-way.§ The "new tomb" cut out of the rock in which our Lord was laid consisted of a single chamber, as do most of the similar tombs at Jerusalem; and the door was low, as usual.‖ The angel who swung open the heavy stone door for Jesus to come forth, sat or rested upon it, with his feet on the ground. Many suppose that the door was closed by means of a large boulder, which was "rolled" up to the entrance, or a huge block, which was made to lean upon it. But nothing of this sort appears ever to have been in use. The Greek uses both *ἀποκυλίσει* and *ἀποκεκύλισται*,¶ the former of which is used by the Septuagint, in Gen. xxix., 10, in the sense of "cause to slide off." Many of the doors of ancient



Stone Door of Sepulchre. (Mark xvi., 1-3.)

* Porter, "Giant Cities," p. 139.

† Pococke, vol. ii., p. 23; Thevenot, part i., chap. xi. ‡ Mark xvi., 1-3.

§ Pococke, vol. ii., p. 21; Maundrell, p. 76, who visited Jerusalem in 1697.

‖ John xx., 5. ¶ Mark xvi., 3, 4.

sepulchres have lost their hinges, which have been broken in order to rifle their contents; but some are yet in a good state of preservation, while most show the grooves in which the doors once turned. It would, moreover, be hard to conceive of the "sealing" of any other kind of door.*

It was customary in Palestine, as in Egypt, to seal the door of tombs to prevent their being rifled; for seals are often found in the latter country, stamped upon clay, which had evidently been thus used. We copy such an Egyptian tomb seal from Wilkinson (vol. ii., p. 364). Seals impressed upon wax are now put upon chests and doors by the authorities in all parts of Turkey, and upon magazines or store-rooms.† But there is no longer occasion to place them upon tombs, the body being buried in the ground.



Seal on Tomb-door. (Matt. xxvii., 66.)

But it was only the rich who could thus afford to bury their dead; had it been otherwise the whole land would, by this time, have been turned into a vast cemetery. Ordinarily, as has been already remarked, the dead were laid in the ground, as now, and covered over with earth. A stone was sometimes placed over the spot, to designate the last resting-place of man. The form and materials of these simple graves has differed in different epochs. Sometimes the body was placed in a hole in the ground, and sometimes in a box of burned clay with its lid. The latter was especially used in Mesopotamia, where the body was neither embalmed nor burned. Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac were probably buried in this manner in the cave of Machpelah; but their posterity generally adopted the practice of embalming from the Egyptians, as more consonant with their faith in a future life. The plainest graves have a rough upright stone at the head without inscription; and such are commonly those of the Bedawin of the Desert. The better class have a pillar or regularly hewn stone erected, with a few words inscribed, either at the head alone, or at the head and foot of the grave. Such was the grave of Rachel.‡ Again, large tiles were placed like a ridge over the body, or it was inclosed in rude masonry, and covered with a slab. The body is now uniformly placed

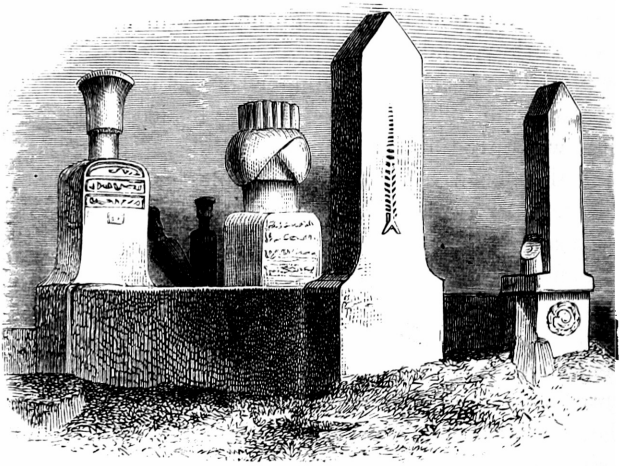
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* Matt. xxvii., 66; Ussher, p. 549.

† Pococke, vol. i., p. 26.

‡ Gen. xxxv., 20.

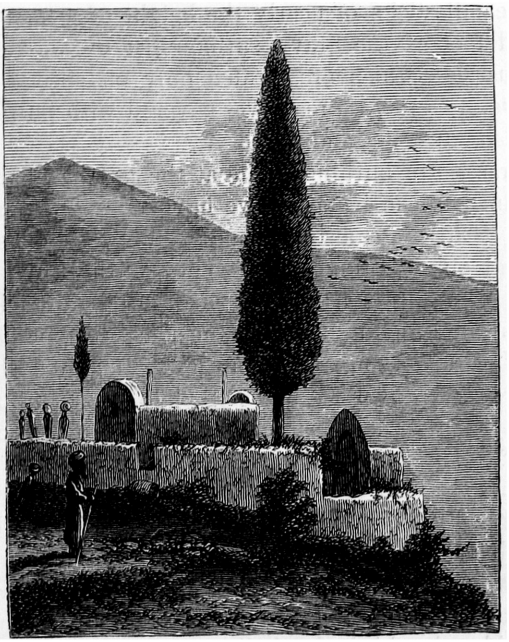
in the ground in immediate contact with the earth. In Armenia and Persia the grave-stone is sometimes cut in the shape of a sitting ram, or of a lion, according as the dead man was a shepherd or a soldier; or a flat slab bears, besides an inscription, a representation of the tools used by the deceased in his trade. The grave-stones of those who have lost their lives, as it is supposed, for their religion, bear the figure of a man holding his own head in his hand. The graves of learned or great men, and especially of reputed saints, are built of masonry, and thickly plastered over with mortar, which is kept



Oriental Graves. (Gen. xxxv., 20.)

bright by frequent whitening.* Such is the so-called grave of Polycarp at Smyrna, venerated alike by Christians and Muslims, the latter of whom, however, claim it to be the tomb of one of their own saints. There is often a recess in the masonry, as in the present case, where wax tapers or lamps are lighted in honor of the saint, sometimes in the fulfillment of a vow. When still greater honor is to be shown to the dead, a building is erected over the grave, which may be sufficiently fine to deserve the name of a mausoleum. Such is the celebrated shrine of Hosein at Kerbelah, near Bagdad. Every one knows the so-called tombs of Absalom and of Zechariah at

* Matt. xxiii., 27.



Tomb of Polycarp at Smyrna. (Matt. xxiii., 27.)

Jerusalem. The Muslim mausoleums are very similar, the only difference being that the former represent the Egyptian pyramid, and the latter the Saracenic dome. Such structures are erected by the sultans for themselves and their families during their lifetime. Upright stones, carved with inscriptions, stand at each end of a tomb of masonry, which covers the remains of the sultan himself, one of which bears his official head-dress. The grave is covered with the richest carpets, shawls, and cloths embroidered with gold and pearls; and several priests are engaged in reciting or reading the Koran, or in saying prayers to be put to the credit of the dead at the judgment.* This is done at the tomb of Mohammed. The sultan and many other rich sinners send a yearly offering of Cashmere shawls, and cloths embroidered with pearls and precious stones, to be spread over his grave, and finally become the property of the priests who have charge of the premises. There are, also,

* Thevenot, p. 21; Lane, vol. i., p. 157.

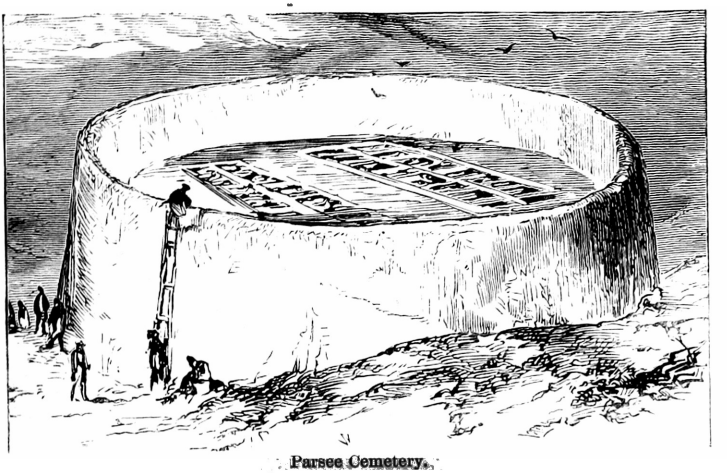
massive candlesticks of nearly the height of a man set at the head and foot of the grave, surmounted by wax-candles of prodigious size, which are lighted only on special occasions. The grave of Cyrus, we read, was covered with purple carpets, Babylonish garments, and drapery.

The practice of burning lights at the graves of the dead is not confined to the instances we have mentioned, nor to the Muslims. Christians also observe it for several days after the burial, and on its anniversary. They burn lamps also, both day and night, before the images of dead saints in private houses and in the churches. At the so-called sepulchre of our Lord at Jerusalem, the spot where he is thought to have been buried is covered over with a small chapel, from whose ceiling hang forty-four lamps of silver gilt, which are kept constantly burning.* Particular spots are thought holy, and whoever is buried there is sure of a place in heaven. The Hebrews, especially since the captivity, have always desired to be buried at Jerusalem, believing that such alone are to reign with the Messiah when he comes. This accounts for the unusual number of graves around the Holy City. Every Persian who is able provides that his body shall be conveyed to the shrine of their chief saint, Hosein, at Kerbelah. The rich pack up the bodies of their relatives as soon as dead, and send them by caravan, while the poor bury their dead at home, and, after a year disinter their bones, and put them up, half a dozen in a box, the diminished expense coming within their means.† Greek Christians have, from time immemorial, buried their dead in the yard of their churches, the old bones being taken up from time to time, on account of the limited number of graves, to make room for new burials, and being laid up in a vaulted chamber. Something like this may be alluded to in Ezek. xliii., 7–9.

* Thevenot, part i., p. 187. As we have had repeated occasion to refer to Thevenot, we must say a word upon its alleged plagiarism. Morèri says: "Il ne vit pourtant qu'u ne partie de l'Europe.....Ce fut des instructions qu'il reçut de leur bouche, et des mémoires qu'ils lui communiquèrent, qu'il composa les voyages qu'il donna au public" ("Dictionaire Historique," vol. x., p. 138; Paris, 1759). However this may be, his statements bear the stamp of authenticity to all who know the East, whoever be their real author. We have not, moreover, made a quotation which we could not prove from other authorities.

† Exod. xiii., 19.

There is a very peculiar form of tomb in use among a certain class of people, of which we annex a representation, not on account of its being referred to in the Hebrew Scriptures, but because it must have been in use in Persia and Chaldea during the Jewish captivity. It is a Parsee cemetery. The



Parsee Cemetery.

people, who are followers of Zoroaster, adhere to his doctrines in spite of terrible persecution, and are now mostly found in the region of Bombay, where they enjoy the protection of the British Government. Their cemeteries consist of a circular wall, with vaults under an open terrace, upon which the bodies of the dead are laid. When the flesh has been devoured by the birds of prey, which are ever hovering about, the bones fall through the grated openings into the vaults beneath, where they remain untouched as long as the building stands.* It is singular that the custom of the savage New Zealanders is essentially the same; for they bury, indeed, their dead in the ground, but leave them there only long enough for the flesh to decay, when they disinter them, carefully clean every bone, and lay them away in natural caves or artificial tombs; nor can the disturbance of these bones in their resting-place be expiated by any thing short of the death of the guilty.†

* Rawlinson, "Herodotus," vol. i., p. 273, note.

† Rienzi, "Océanie," vol. i., p. 58. See an interesting account, from *The Times of India*, in Littell's "Living Age," No. 1531 (1873), p. 127.

There appears to be little or no difference between the funeral rites of the ancients and those of the moderns. The mourning for the dead is also essentially the same.* As soon as death takes place, the female members of the household and the professional mourning-women† announce it to the neighborhood by setting up their shrill and piercing cry, called the "tahlil," which is heard at a great distance, and above every other noise, even the din of battle, and is quite characteristic of the East. This shriek is uttered by the Arab women on all occasions of excitement,‡ and is probably referred to in Mark v., 39, and in Micah i., 8, where it is compared to the cry of the screech-owl. In mourning for the dead, the women also weep, beat their breasts, tear off handfuls of their hair, and throw dust upon their heads, as is well represented in the Egyptian picture of a woman mourning before a mummy.



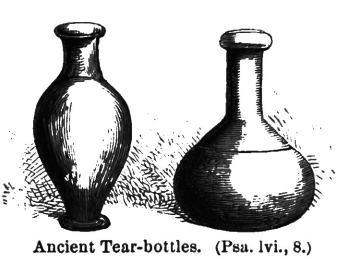
Ancient Mourning: laying the Hand upon the Head, and crying. (2 Sam. xiii., 19.)

Among the different nations which dwell on the banks of the Nile, throughout its course, the women leave the nail of their little finger to grow very long in order to cut their faces with it when mourning,§ a practice forbidden to the Israelites by the Mosaic law.‖ In Persia one or two priests take their station on the flat roof of a house of mourning, and in plaintive strains, and with much show of sorrow, recapitulate the circumstance of the decease.¶ Meanwhile the entire household, and the assembled relatives and friends, join in frantic and noisy demonstrations of grief. The practice of tearing one's clothes as a sign of sorrow is strictly adhered to on such occasions.** Care is taken, however, not to injure the garment by this operation, for the undertaker, who had immediately assumed the arranging of every detail, goes round to every mourner, and carefully rips the central seam of his kuftan, or robe, three or four inches down the breast: this is afterward easily repaired with

* Churchill, "Lebanon," vol. ii., p. 299.
† Jer. ix., 19, 20.
‡ Layard, vol. ii., p. 69.
§ Bruce, vol. iii., p. 680.
‖ Deut. xiv., 1.
¶ Perkins, p. 341.
** Lev. x., 6; 2 Sam. xiii., 31; 2 Chron. xxxiv., 27, etc.

a needle and thread.* Mourners sometimes take off their outer clothing, and cover themselves from head to foot with a piece of brown, coarse sackcloth, such as is worn by slaves while offered for sale; and occasionally they throw dust or ashes upon their heads when thus covered, as a token of grief and humiliation.†

In Persia they still bottle up their tears as of old. This is done in the following manner: as the mourners are sitting around and weeping, the master of ceremonies presents each one with a piece of cotton-wool, with which he wipes off his tears; this cotton is afterward squeezed into a bottle, and the tears are preserved as a powerful and efficacious remedy for reviving a dying man after every other means has failed.‡ It is also employed as a charm against evil influences.§ This custom is probably alluded to in Psa. lvi., 8: "Put thou my tears into thy bottle." The practice was once universal, as is proved by the tear-bottles which are found in almost every ancient tomb, for the ancients buried them with their dead as a proof of their affection. The body is neither burned, as was practiced by the Greeks and Romans, and is still done by the Hindoos;‖ nor is it embalmed, according to the custom of the Egyptians, which was often done by the Hebrews.¶ His best clothes are put upon the body of the dead, and it is laid, not in a coffin, but on an open bier,** fully exposed to view. The Greeks adorn it with flowers, especially in the case of young people of both sexes. The funeral procession is silent with the Turks, while in a Christian burial the priest softly hums prayers on the way to the grave. Both Christians and Muslims repeat prayers at the grave. Every valuable garment or other article is then taken off the body, and it is buried without a coffin, in a shallow grave, and covered



Ancient Tear-bottles. (Psa. lvi., 8.)

* Morier, "Hadji Baba," p. 114.

† Perkins, p. 210; Gen. xxxvii., 34; 2 Sam. iii., 31; Job ii., 12; Psa. xxx., 11; Jonah iii., 6.

‡ Morier, vol. ii., p. 179. § Perkins, p. 209. ‖ 1 Sam. xxxi., 11-13.

¶ Gen. l., 2, 26. ** 2 Sam. iii., 31; 2 Chron. xvi., 14.

over with soil. The women of the household do not accompany the procession on its way to the cemetery; they merely set up the tahlil as it leaves the house. They afterward visit the grave from time to time, in order to weep and pray,* and priests are hired to do the same.† The family and relatives of the dead observe mourning by wearing their oldest garments or clothes of dull colors, and by laying aside their ornaments.‡ Among some Armenian Christians a sacrifice is offered, which is distinctly stated not to be propitiatory, but an act of charity to the living for the benefit of the dead. The priests bring an ox, or sheep, or other clean animal, or fowl, to the door of the church, as well as some salt, which is placed on the altar; prayers are said in which the deceased is specially mentioned, and forgiveness is asked for his sins. The salt is given to the animal, after which it is slain. A portion of it belongs to the priest, and some is given to the poor; of the remainder a feast is made for the assembled friends. None of it must remain until the morrow.§ These practices are evidently Jewish in their origin, but seem aimless and insignificant. It is the custom among all classes to entertain the company who have attended the funeral with a supper on their return from the grave, as well as to distribute food and money to the poor, with the request that they pray for the repose of the soul of the dead. This is often repeated on the seventh, fifteenth, thirtieth, and fortieth days after the funeral, and on the anniversary of the event for several years afterward.‖ The ancients observed the same custom, and the Greeks now call this food by the same name as their ancestors. Among the heathen Circassians the anniversary of the death of one of their chieftains is celebrated with religious rites, followed by games and athletic sports, which recall those performed at the funeral of Homer's heroes.¶ But the feast for the dead was forbidden to the Jews by the Mosaic law.**

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* John xi., 31.

† Porter, "Giant Cities," p. 39; Thevenot, p. 58; Lynch, p. 391.

‡ Exod. xxxiii., 4–6. § Smith, vol. i., p. 172; Lev. ii., 13; xxii., 30.

‖ Thomson, "The Land and the Book," vol. i., p. 149; Tavernier, p. 86.

¶ Spencer, vol. ii., p. 350. ** Deut. xxvi., 14; Jer. xvi., 6, 7.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOCIAL LIFE.

ORIENTALS possess an eminently social disposition. No distinctions of rank or fortune are ever allowed to interfere with the gratification of this taste, although no people on earth are more particular in observing the conventional forms which govern social life. It is difficult to conceive that from among a people so thoroughly social there should have arisen, during the earlier centuries of our era, the numerous mute hermits described by history, whose solitary cells, caves, and pillars still attest the truth of its statements. But the warmth of the Oriental temperament, and the depth of its religious convictions, sufficiently account for the apparent contradiction. This social peculiarity is the mainspring of that hospitality which has ever characterized the East. It is not a land of books nor of newspapers; the living voice is the only medium of information, and he who happens to have laid up a store of the latter is sure to be feasted until he has exhausted his stock. The people are inquisitive, quick of apprehension, and fond of knowledge of every kind; and when the long evenings come, the man who can best entertain the company by the flickering light of the camp-fire, or of the pine-chip wedged in a crack of the wall, or in the rich man's hall where the guests recline upon the cushioned divan, and the apartment is lighted by the tall candlestick set in the midst, that man becomes the centre of the group, and is regaled with the best pipe and the choicest coffee. Hospitality has thus grown to be an important institution, practiced as a matter of course. The host of today ever expects to be himself a guest to-morrow. There are no hotels; the caravanseraÿ, as its name sufficiently denotes, is a house (*saraï*) intended for the accommodation of the passing caravan, composed of merchants traveling with their merchandise, who could not conveniently be accommodated in private houses. The solitary traveler, or the small company who journey on business unencumbered by baggage, stop at the

Arab's tent, or alight at the "guest-chamber" (page 442) of the mountain village, and sit down at the unaltered board of the sheikh, or kiahaya. Thus did Abraham entertain "angels unawares."* So it was with Nehemiah, who, while he governed the returned captives of Israel without taxation, lest they be overburdened, yet practiced an almost regal hospitality, daily entertaining at his table "a hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers, besides those that came unto him from among the heathen that were about;" so that the provisions daily consumed in his household consisted of "one ox and six choice sheep, also fowls," "and once in ten days store of all sorts of wine."† And the Hebrew legislator deemed the practice of hospitality of so great importance, that he frequently enjoined it upon his people to "love the stranger," reminding them that they themselves had been strangers in the land of Egypt.‡

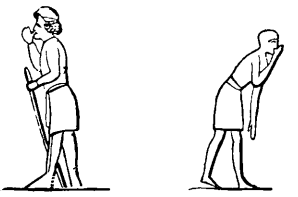
In performing the duties of hospitality to a traveler or visitor, be he a stranger or a friend, the host receives him in his best room or in his liwan, if the weather be mild. The reception-room becomes his apartment for the time being. Here his friends call upon him, and here he transacts his business; here, also, he takes his meals, his host himself waiting upon him if he desires to show him special respect;§ and here he sleeps at night, upon bedding kept for the purpose in a closet of the same room. Before his arrival, a messenger announces his approach to the master of the house, who hastens to his gate, holds the bridle and stirrup, and helps him dismount. If they are old friends, or of rank nearly equal, they embrace, each placing his right hand upon the other's left shoulder, and kissing him on the right cheek, then putting the left hand on the other's right shoulder, and kissing him on the left cheek.‖ It is thus that treacherous Joab embraced Amasa, and instead of placing his right hand upon his shoulder, seized him by the beard, and stabbed him "with the sword in his left," "in the fifth rib."¶ And thus did Judas Iscariot kiss our Lord.**

The *salaam* is now exchanged. "Peace be unto thee;" answer: "And unto thee be peace."†† But if the visitor be of

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* Heb. xiii., 2.
† Neh. v., 17, 18.
‡ Exod. xxii., 21; xxiii., 9; Deut. x., 19.
§ Gen. xviii., 8.
‖ Luke vii., 45; xv., 20; Perkins, p. 69.
¶ 2 Sam. xx., 9, 10.
** Matt. xxvi., 49.
†† 1 Sam. xxv., 6; Luke xxiv., 36, etc.

a higher rank than his host, the latter kisses him not, but "bows down to the earth" when he salutes him, touching the ground with his hand, which he then brings to his lips and his head.* This mode of salutation existed both in Persia and Egypt, being pictured upon the monuments, as may be seen in the accompanying illustration. The host now leads the way into the house, places his friend in the seat of honor, the chief corner of the divan; then takes a seat by his side, if on a footing of equality, or kisses his hand, the hem of his garment, or even his feet,† according to his rank, and retiring a few steps, crosses his hands upon his girdle—the habitual posture of a servant—thus signifying that he is waiting for orders.‡ The guest, on the other hand, seeks not to be outdone in politeness; he accepts the honors due to his position, but endeavors to make his host feel at ease, by insisting upon his sitting down: "No, not on the floor, I beg you; nor there on the farthest corner of the divan, but here by my side." Then follow salutations, always begun by the man of higher rank, with inquiries concerning health, and a host of empty phrases which display the good-breeding of the parties.§ The Persians excel all other Orientals in the use of these phrases and forms of etiquette, which they carry to a pitch often ridiculed by their neighbors.‖ It is curious to find, Herodotus (B.C. 450) states, that the Persians in his day "paid so great attention to forms of address that one could thereby at once ascertain the rank of a stranger: when of equal rank," he says, "instead of speaking, they kiss each other on the lips; when one is a little inferior to the other, the kiss is given on the cheek; and when the difference of rank is great, the inferior prostrates himself upon the ground."¶ Herodotus lived and wrote when the Persian empire embraced all the lands of the Bible in Asia and Africa (B.C. 450), so that his description applies to all the East, and was doubtless as generally true in his day as in our times.



The ancient Salaam, or Temenah, in Egypt and Persia.

* Gen. xviii., 2; 1 Sam. xxiv., 8, etc. † Luke vii., 38, 45.
‡ Deut. x., 8: 1 Sam. xvi., 22, etc. § Churchill, "Lebanon," vol. ii., p. 285.
‖ Rawlinson, "Herodotus," vol. i., p. 218, note. ¶ Herodotus, bk. i., § 134.

The custom of washing the feet of a guest is not so extensively practiced at the present time as it was anciently.* This is probably owing to the fact that the ancients mostly wore sandals; whereas, among the moderns, the more convenient morocco shoe and boot have almost wholly superseded them, except in the Desert, or among the fellahin and other peasants. Yet the custom of washing the feet is still practiced in the rural districts, and among people farthest removed from the reach of foreign innovations, such as the inhabitants of Koordistan, of Greater and Lesser Armenia, and of Circassia.†

We have, in the preceding chapter, described the permanent portion of the family—the husband, wife, children, and slaves; and now, before proceeding to delineate their relations with the outer world, we shall speak of the "hired servants," those transitory members of the household whose management constitutes one of the momentous questions of the day in our own country. In the East, where oppression and wrong have always prevailed, there has never been any difficulty in finding people willing to be hired for the regular work of the house. The supply has, indeed, been so much greater than the demand, as to cause a minute division of labor, greatly increasing the number of servants in a household.‡ In an ordinary family, female slaves do the cooking, washing, scrubbing, etc. But a man whose position requires the entertaining of much company hires a male cook and a *seis* (groom), whose work is confined to the selamlik, or men's apartments. Besides these, however, there are waiters, pipe-bearers, messengers, and servants of light work, whose number is increased on special occasions. None of these receive any wages, but the master presents each with a suit of clothes at the great yearly festival, and gifts are also bestowed upon them, mostly in money (bakshish), from such visitors as have business with their master, and desire a good word spoken to him at the opportune moment. Hence the number of these waiters and retainers depends on the amount of business done by the master. Should he desire to retain any of them whose income does not prove sufficient, he himself makes presents to them, or favors them in

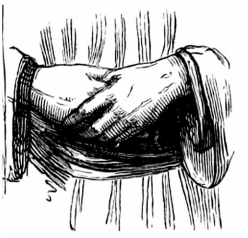
* Gen. xviii., 4; 1 Sam. xxv., 41; Luke vii., 44; John xii., 3, etc.

† Spencer, vol. ii., p. 202.

‡ Exod. xii., 45; Lev. xxv., 40; Luke xv., 19.

their business by means of his influence, but never pays them wages.* The position of these retainers is always more honorable than that of mere hired servants; for they are often near relations, thus employed as a stepping-stone to something better; indeed, the master's own sons often fulfill these duties in the selamlik, and his wife and daughters in the harim, all of whom are forbidden by custom to sit in his presence. Rank or position in society make no difference whatever in these matters; hence this class of servants enjoy a familiarity with, and exert an influence upon, their masters which hired men can never acquire; and they are treated by him like so many sons. Compare the parable of the Prodigal Son, and particularly Luke xv., 28; also 1 Kings xix., 21.

When waiting upon his master, the servant stands upon the farthest edge of the raised platform, having left his shoes at the door; his hands are folded, and rest upon the centre of his girdle; and he watches closely every movement of his master, prompt to attend to all his wants, which are expressed by a nod or a sign.† He fills his pipe and hands him his coffee; he sets his food before him, and it is his special duty to "pour water on his hands" to wash.‡ Should he happen to be missing when wanted, his master summons him by clapping his hands so effectually that the sound is heard throughout the house, especially as the doors and windows generally stand open.§ We have already stated that it is the habit of the men and women to gird themselves when at work, and this is particularly the case with the servant; for he often has occasion to roll up his sleeves and to draw up his sharwar, tightening it with his girdle, and sometimes to bind an apron around his waist.‖

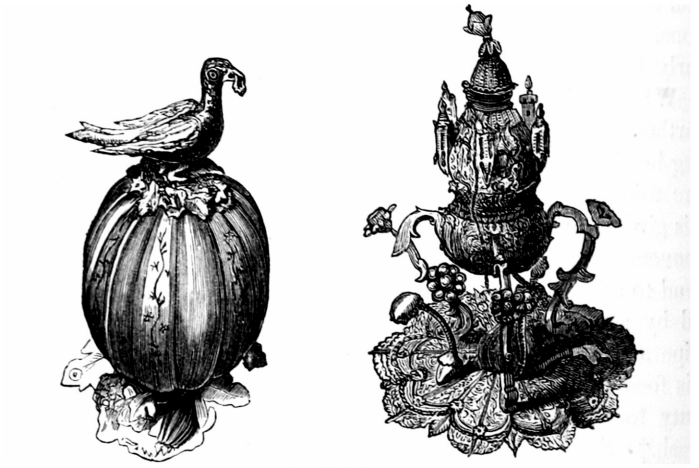


The Servant's Hands before his Master.

When an entertainment is given to which guests are specially invited, it is customary to send them a servant, sometimes more than one, in order to request them to "come, for all things are ready."¶

* Acts xii., 20. † Psa. cxxiii., 2. ‡ 2 Kings iii., 11. § Lane, vol. i., p. 254. ‖ John xiii., 4. See Philo's account of the Essenes, quoted by Prideaux, vol. iii., p. 473. ¶ Matt. xxii., 2–4; Luke xiv., 16, 17.

When the master of the house desires specially to honor his guests, he offers them fumes of incense before the indispensable coffee and pipes are brought in. The perfume usually employed is the "lignum aloes," a small bit of which is dropped upon burning coals in a little chafing-dish of silver or gold filigree, sometimes adorned with precious stones; the fumes escape through the perforated cover. This is simply set in some part of the room, or it is presented to each guest to inhale in turn, an embroidered handkerchief being thrown over his head, which he himself removes when satisfied. The accom-

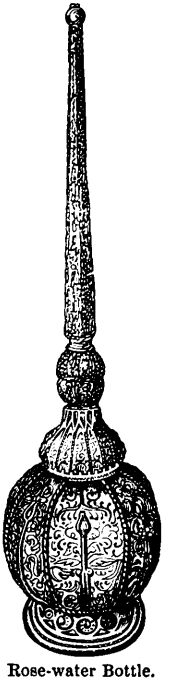


Jeweled Censers.

panying cuts represent silver censers of exquisite workmanship. Sometimes they are seen with a long handle, like those drawn upon Assyrian and Egyptian monuments. Sprinkling with rose-water frequently precedes the offering of incense. The vessel employed is a small bottle, with a long, narrow neck, perforated at the end, and is usually made to match the censer in material and workmanship. A little rose-water is poured upon the hands of each guest, who passes them over his face, head, and beard, after which comes the incense, whose fumes cling the more tenaciously to a damp surface. In acknowledging this attention, each guest exclaims "Elhamd ulillah" (thanks be to God).* Rose-water is in general use on festive

* Tavernier, "Seraglio," p. 47; Prov. xxvii., 9.

occasions, and is freely sprinkled upon a passing bridal party. Incense is also in great favor throughout the East. It is burned in religious ceremonies, and while the body of the dead is lying in the house awaiting interment, a practice which doubtless contributes to neutralize the noxious vapors which might otherwise prove deleterious in that dry and hot climate. The wealthy often throw a small piece of ambergris upon the burning coals of the brazier, for the sake of the perfume, or, as they sometimes say, to counteract the pernicious effects of the charcoal.* Mastic and ambergris are often burned in the pipe with the light Volo tobacco, giving it a still finer flavor; and the same substances are not unfrequently used to flavor coffee.† Guests are often refreshed with sherbet, a grateful drink, sometimes cooled with snow, consisting of water flavored with sirup, usually of acid cherries (*fishneh*) or apricots; or it is simply sweetened, and flavored with lemon-juice, rose or orange-flower water, musk, or ambergris.‡ Ice is never used to cool drinks, from fear that the frozen water may have been impure, whereas snow is formed of rain-water.



Rose-water Bottle.

While the refreshments we have described are being served, the flow of conversation is uninterrupted; and as Orientals are never in a hurry, much time is taken up in this manner, the master of the house meanwhile lavishing every attention upon his guests, and at the same time maintaining his own dignity. The polite phraseology in use among Orientals, especially of the higher classes, enables them to talk long without accomplishing any higher object than to while away the time. One is particularly struck with the numberless religious expressions and pious ejaculations employed on all occasions, their frequent allusions to the Deity, his superintending providence, and their dependence upon him. Unfortunately, few of them ever reflect on the meaning of such language; while many are doubt-

* Prov. vii., 17. † Lane, vol. i., p. 175. ‡ Thevenot, p. 34.

less ignorant of its sense, as is the case among us with the majority of those who use the expressions, "Adieu" and "Good-bye." This habitual "taking of the name of God in vain" has led to a great deal of profanity, for which both sexes as well as all classes and ages are notorious.

We must also remark that there is a great deal of vulgarity in conversation, especially in large assemblages of men, particularly Muslims, on festive occasions, and when the fumes of wine, or of the still stronger arrack, have begun to affect their brains. We have been repeatedly assured that this is the case even with the fair sex in similar circumstances; and hence the inference is a perfectly reasonable one that the mingling of the sexes in society exerts a refining influence upon both. This fact will serve to explain certain expressions in the Holy Scriptures, which occur far more frequently in contemporary secular works, and reflect the condition of society at that period.

But there are more agreeable, or at least less objectionable, characteristics noticeable in the conversations at a social gathering. The language is often metaphoric, and interspersed with proverbs and parables, of which one or more of the guests has a store laid up for such occasions. A few specimens of these will be found in the Appendix. As to parables, the Scriptures contain by far the finest, uttered by Him "who spoke as never man spake." A story, whether long or short, true or fictitious, original or second-hand, is always welcome; and whoever has a good stock of these, and can tell them well, is sure of invitations to weddings, festivals, and all sorts of social gatherings. One class of these stories is in the style of the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments." A very large collection might be made of tales of this kind, which have never been committed to writing, but are traditionally preserved with great fidelity.

And there is another class of stories and anecdotes, containing no allusion to the supernatural, but dealing only with matters of fact, whose object is simply merriment. These, also, are mostly preserved in the memories of men, the only written collection in existence being the so-called witticisms of Noosreddin Hojah of Konieh (Iconium), in Asia Minor; the language is Turkish, and the style pithy and concise. The

professed story-teller sometimes entertains a select audience in the houses of the great, but is more commonly found at a public *café*, where he attracts customers and collects his fees among the crowd of eager listeners. There he holds forth with inimitable action, accompanying the description of every scene with a peculiar and highly expressive pantomime, an ever-changing expression of countenance, an occasional shrug of the shoulders, a nod or knowing shake of the head, a sudden throwing out of the five fingers, a shaking of the garment, and even spitting, or protruding the tongue—gestures and signs whose full force and meaning can be appreciated only by a native-born Oriental. And when he has wrought up his audience to the highest pitch of expectation—when the charming princess is just on the point of dropping into the jaws of the horrid dragon, which licks his lips in eager anticipation of the precious morsel—the narrator suddenly pauses, and passes round the contribution-plate, pleading that he is too much exhausted immediately to proceed.

But we must now consider the dinner, the most important part of an entertainment in every land. The people of the East take but two regular meals a day, *i. e.*, a hearty breakfast early in the morning, before going to their business, and the principal meal at night, after they come home. Rich people often eat a regular meal at noon;* but the more common practice is to take some light luncheon in an informal manner. The evening meal is that to which guests are usually invited. It is alluded to in our New Testament under the name of "supper," in the sense of an *evening meal*.† It would have been better translated *dinner*. The distinction becomes evident in Luke xiv., 12, where our version has rendered "dinner or supper" what should have been translated "breakfast or dinner." In John xxi., 12, "come and dine" should have been "come and breakfast."

In Eastern entertainments nothing of consequence ever takes place before the dinner has been dispatched; music and dancing, exhibitions and amusements of all kinds, come *after* the cravings of appetite have been satisfied, and all are in a mood to be pleased by any thing they may see or hear. As the guests assemble,

* Gen. xliii., 16.

† Luke xiv., 24; xxii., 20; Rev. xix., 9.

they take their places on the divan, lining three sides of the apartment, and not a few of them plainly seek the uppermost seats at the feast,* which are at the corners of the divan, for



Ancient Modes of sitting like the Modern.

they will there be served first, and with the choicest morsels. Saul's "seat at table by the wall" was doubtless the chief corner of the room, diagonally opposite the door.† The Mool-

* Matt. xxiii., 6.

† 1 Sam. xx., 25.

lahs, Kiatibs, and Khojahs who may be present are sure to make for those places,* for they are proud, bigoted, and generally blessed with good appetites. But Orientals are very particular about rank, and most men dare not venture beyond certain limits. When the master, anxious to bestow due honor upon each of his guests, perceives one of them occupying a place inferior to his comparative rank, he invites him to move up, saying, "My lord, sit up higher," at the same time requesting the others to make room for him; the man thus promoted "has worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with him,"† *i. e.*, he receives honor from the other guests, who bow and proffer compliments to him.

To Occidentals accustomed to sit upon raised seats, with their feet resting upon the floor, the Oriental mode of sitting upon a divan, a carpet, or a mat, is painful in the extreme; all travelers complain of it. But the Oriental is accustomed to it from his childhood, and his limbs acquire a wonderful elasticity. He sits cross-legged, or upon his feet, without weariness; and should he accept the proffered chair of his foreign host, he is sure soon to gather up his feet under him, or to exchange his high seat for the floor in order "to rest himself." The preceding illustrations from the monuments of Egypt show that its ancient people, and therefore the Hebrews, who lived so long among them, sat in this manner, as also do all modern Orientals and Africans. The different positions here represented are not assumed at pleasure, those which hide the feet being the most respectful; the others are taken according to the work to be done, and some indicate a position impracticable to an Occidental.

It is customary with all, but *obligatory* for Muslims, to wash the hands before eating. The sect of the Sunnies, which includes the Turks and Arabs, wash *both* hands, but the Sheites, or Persians, only the *right*, with which the food is taken and conveyed to the mouth. Thus did the Pharisees in the time of our Saviour.‡ For this purpose a ewer and basin are presented to each guest in turn by a servant, who drops upon his right knee while he rests the basin upon the left; the towel is carried upon his shoulder, or is offered by another servant.

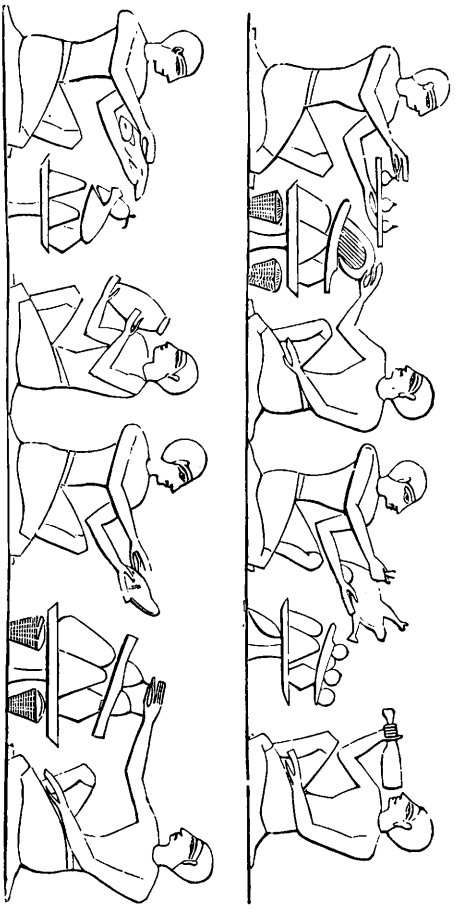
* Morier, vol. ii., p. 143. † Luke xiv., 10. ‡ Matt. xv., 2; Mark vii., 3.

There is abundant evidence from history, both sacred and profane, that during the New Testament period many of the Jews had conformed to the luxurious but inconvenient custom of taking their meals in a reclining attitude. The couch is mentioned in Mark vii., 4, and the narratives contained in Luke vii., 38, and John xi., 2, and xii., 3, clearly imply that our Lord sometimes reclined while eating, so that his feet lay at the outer edge of the couch. The custom was general among the Greeks and Romans, and was perhaps adopted by some Orientals as early as the conquests of Alexander and the reigns of his successors, three hundred years before our era. The table was usually square or oblong, and the couch either semicircular, as seen among the remains of Herculaneum, at the Naples Museum, or there were three couches, set against three sides of the table, leaving one side open for the servants to set on the food and attend to the wants of the guests. Three persons usually took their seats upon each couch, but there were sometimes as many as four, or even five. They reclined upon their left elbows, supported by cushions, the feet being extended outwardly, and the back of each guest turned toward his next neighbor. The faces and hands thus verged toward a common centre, where was set the dish from which they all partook with their fingers, according to the Oriental mode. Thus we can understand how John, the beloved disciple, leaned upon Jesus's bosom,* and how it was practicable for Jesus to hand the sop to either of the disciples.† These arrangements were, however, inconvenient and clumsy, compared to the simple style even then generally prevalent in the East. The former required an apartment exclusively devoted to that purpose, like our own dining-rooms. Among the Jews it appears to have been an upper room, in the second story of the house.‡ It would, moreover, seem that this mode was adopted only on occasion of some special entertainment, for it is alluded to in the Gospel narrative only in such a connection.§ We have a parallel to this mingling of Oriental and Occidental customs in the present practice of introducing a table, chairs, knives, and forks at a feast where Europeans are invited.

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* John xiii., 25.
† John xiii., 27.
‡ Mark xiv., 15.
§ Luke vii., 36, 38; xxii., 11, 12; John xii., 2, 8.

The Oriental mode was anciently practiced by the Egyptians before they adopted chairs, and raised their tables to a corresponding level. Their sculptures represent them sitting on the ground as at the present day, with the right knee raised to support the right hand, with which they eat. The accompanying illustration also indicates another practice which they had in common with the moderns; they not only ate with their fingers, but even carved a chicken without the aid of either knife or fork. They dealt with a fish in the same manner.



Ancient Egyptians at Dinner.

The small table, or stool, already described (page 472), is not usually placed in the centre of an apartment, and then the guests invited to take their seats, but is set before the principal guest, as he occupies the seat of honor on the divan, and the others come up and take their places around it. This is done in obedience to a command similar to that of Joseph to his servants, "Set on bread,"* the very expression still used on such occasions, the word *bread* signifying, in all Oriental languages, food, or "the dinner." When there

* Gen. xliii., 31.

are several tables, they are set at the corners of the divan, or in different parts of the room. As many as twelve persons can sit at a single table.* When the stool has been set in its place on the crumb-cloth, with the tray upon it, piles of thin, flat loaves, with a couple of wooden spoons, are placed at intervals around the edge of the tray, interspersed with onions, small basins of leben, and little plates containing cheese, all of which serve as *ragoux* to excite the appetite. Each guest now takes his place, and is provided with an embroidered napkin, which is tucked under the chin and spread upon the knees. When the master wishes to show special honor to his guests, he sits or stands by, waits upon them, deprecates the meagre fare, and bids them partake freely. As each dish is set upon the table, he exclaims, "*T'fuddaloo!*" (help yourselves). Scarcely a word is spoken through the entire meal, and the dinner is dispatched expeditiously and in silence. Not unfrequently as many as a hundred different dishes appear upon the tables, one after the other, in quick succession, beginning with soup, and alternating a sweet dish with some form of cooked meats, as a dish of fruit-jelly succeeded by roast fowl, and finishing at length with a huge platter of pilaw, or boiled rice. The "*pièce de résistance*," or chief dish, is a roasted sheep or fatted calf, served whole, and torn in pieces with the hands, each guest doing his own carving.† One is not obliged to eat or even to taste of every thing set before him. There is an order in the tables, and the dishes are passed from the first down through all the gradations, ending in the kitchen, where the servants, retainers, and scullions wait impatiently for their share. Each table of guests, however, is usually furnished with its separate dish of soup and pilaw, and there are sometimes several roasted sheep. The servants supply the guests, whenever called for, with water, lemonade, or shorbet. At the close of the repast, each one rises when it suits him, and resumes his place on the divan, washes his hands as before the meal, and is then served with coffee and a pipe.

Spirit, or arrack, is sometimes taken before dinner to stimulate the appetite, a few drops of it being poured out into a glass of

* Morier, vol. i., p. 333; Lane, vol. i., p. 183.
† Luke xv., 23; Lane, vol. i., p. 302.

water. During the meal few drink any wine. It is brought on afterward in decanters, with glasses, upon a tray, and the guests drink longer or shorter, as they feel inclined. Some, however, use arrack instead. This custom corresponds with that practiced by the more civilized nations of the West, who drink "after the cloth has been removed;" the only difference appears to be that the latter slide under the table when overcome by liquor, while the former subside in their places on the divan. The practice, so prevalent among a certain class in the East, of drinking to a late hour in the night seems to have been common among the Hebrews, judging from the denunciations of the prophets.*

It is particularly at weddings that the use of wine and also of arrack is considered indispensable, to "rejoice men's hearts." But intoxication from too liberal a supply of wine on such occasions can not be said to be frequent; the number of guests that must share in the distribution of the beverage serving to obviate riotous consequences; besides, they all desire to keep sufficiently sober to take part in the interesting processions with which the ceremony closes.† We have known even the officiating priest to be carried home in a state of insensibility.

The guests being numerous, and the feast continuing several days, an ample store of wine and other provisions must be laid up beforehand;‡ and should the supply give out before the ceremony is over, it casts a damper upon the whole, unless the parties have money, or can borrow it, in order to purchase what is needed. Many people incur a burdensome debt on account of wedding expenses, for the rate of interest on borrowed money is, in the East, rarely less than eighteen per cent., and often much higher. We have the Bible counterpart of the foregoing statements in the narrative of the marriage-feast at Cana of Galilee.§ The quantity of water miraculously turned to wine could not have been less than a hundred gallons. This would provide but little for each guest, considering the habits of the people, who crowd into the house to partake of the feast as long as the provisions last,‖ being pressed to do so by their hospitable host or the master of the feast, who also urges, and some-

* Isa. v., 11. † Perkins, p. 236. ‡ Smith, vol. ii., pp. 196, 231.
§ John ii., 1–10. ‖ Parkyns, vol. ii., pp. 40, 41.

times compels, even the passers-by to come in and drink to the health of the bridegroom and the bride.* The number of guests must have far exceeded what had been anticipated, otherwise the provision would have proved sufficient. It may also have been a poor family, who not only could not afford to buy more wine, but would be greatly aided by any surplus which they could sell. In such case this miracle of Jesus would correspond with the miracle of Elisha increasing the poor widow's oil to pay her debts.†

In festivities, either connected with a wedding or a circumcision, or given in honor of a special guest, the evening is usually spent in entertainments provided for the occasion. The sexes even in such cases are kept strictly separate. Dancing is enjoyed as a spectacle, but not as an exercise to be engaged in for any pleasure it can afford to the performer. Music is indispensable; but the music of the East greatly differs from that of the West, and we must pause here briefly to explain its principles. We have every reason to believe that they were anciently adopted universally everywhere, and that those now prevailing in Europe are comparatively of modern origin.

The impression is general in the West that Oriental melodies are simply set to the minor key, and that they differ from ours in no other respect. It has also been observed that they are destitute of symphony or harmonizing parts; but this has been attributed simply to a want of musical culture; and the expectation has been expressed that their original melodies would, either by introduction among ourselves or by the cultivation of the musical taste of Orientals, be perfected by the addition to the soprano of the alto, tenor, and bass. Practical musicians, however, who have visited those countries, have never failed to discover that there is a radical difference between their own scale and that of the East, so that their violins, guitars, and other stringed instruments are out of tune, and must be strung differently, while the wind-instruments must be made over, and the space between the notes altered, before they are capable of performing Oriental airs. They also find that, after such a change, harmony has become impossible. To obviate this difficulty they have adopted the European minor key in-

* Luke xiv., 23.

† 2 Kings iv., 7.

stead of the native scale as the nearest approach to it. This change, however, is not palatable to the natives; thus travestied, their melodies have no charm for them, and they ever prefer to the most scientific music of Europe their own familiar airs, whose origin is lost in antiquity.

To make this matter a little plainer, let the reader recall the well-known fact that sound is produced by the vibrations of the atmosphere. A high sound or note is the effect of rapid vibrations, and a low sound of slow ones. He may, perhaps, remember hearing a very low bass note of some large organ whose vibrations could almost be counted. A string stretched and fastened at the two ends produces different notes according as it is lengthened or shortened, because a *long* string can not vibrate as rapidly as a *short* one. Now, an instrument has been invented by which we are able precisely to ascertain the number of vibrations produced by each note of the musical scale in a given time. We have thus discovered that the upper *do*, for instance, vibrates twice as fast as the lower one, and the other notes in a fixed proportion or ratio. Here, then, is a list of the number of vibrations in every note of our common scale produced within a given time. We give them as they stand, and also reduced as low as possible, in order to show their numerical relations or proportions at a single glance:

VIBRATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN SCALE.

Notes	Do	Re	Mi	Fa	Sol	La	Si	Do
Number of vibrations	420	472½	525	560	630	700	787½	840
Reduced numbers	24	27	30	32	36	40	45	48

The progression is regular, and shows that the regular ratio in the vibrations of the different notes is produced by a similar ratio in the divisions of the string. Hence the explanation of the harmony of sounds produced by our notes is at once simple and philosophical. It is caused by the frequent union of the waves of sound. This will be made still clearer by the following arrangement of our common musical chords:

First Chord.	Second Chord.	Third Chord.
Do.....24	Re.....27	Re.....27
Mi.....30	Fa.....32	Fa.....32
Sol.....36	Sol.....36	La.....40
Do.....48	Si.....45	Re.....54
Here all the vibrations meet at the second or third.	Here at every third or fourth.	Here at the third or fourth.

It is evident from this statement that harmony of sound is obtained when the vibrations of the different sounds are frequently simultaneous; and the octave must best harmonize with a note because it produces exactly two vibrations to every one of the latter.

If we apply these principles to the Oriental musical scale, we shall see why, with them, harmony is impossible except with the octaves. We only give the results of the examination of an expert, who is himself a professor of Oriental music, is also an Oriental, writes for the instruction of his pupils, and is deemed an authority in these matters. We give the number of vibrations of each note as he has them, and we have also reduced them so as to be able to compare them the more easily with those of the European scale, which are reduced in a similar proportion:

VIBRATIONS OF THE ORIENTAL SCALE.

Notes	Do	Re	Mi	Fa	Sol	La	Si	Do
Number of vibrations	420	432½	504	560	630	672	756	840
Reduced numbers	24	27	29½	32½	38	41	43½	48

A mere glance at this list shows that there is no regular ratio observed in this arrangement. This fact will become still more evident, and the impossibility of harmony will further appear, if we arrange the notes in their regular chords, thus:

Do.....24	Re.....27	Re.....27
Mi.....29½	Fa.....33½	Fa.....33½
Sol.....38	Sol.....38	La.....41
Do.....48	Si.....43½	Re.....54

The foregoing statements will sufficiently explain the peculiarities of Eastern music, and the reader will readily understand why the only accompaniment to a melody consists of a single note struck on different octaves for the sake of variety. The prominence thus given to the key-note makes the air of still greater importance than with us.

The Oriental voice is naturally extremely fine, and is often raised to the falsetto. They have also modes of time unknown to us, which they employ in dancing music: besides our usual measures, they alternate one kind of measure with another, as, for instance, $\frac{2}{4}$ with $\frac{3}{4}$ or $\frac{4}{4}$ with $\frac{5}{4}$, giving one bar to each in turn. They delight in this mixed measure, which appears to affect them, whenever they hear it, in the same manner, some-

what, as a European dancer is affected by the sound of a well-known waltz or polka.

All attempts to express Oriental music by our system of notation must necessarily be futile, for we must always begin by tuning our instruments wrong if we would perform their music at all. Many melodies have been published under the name of Oriental, but they are very incorrect imitations of the originals. They have, moreover, not only semitones like us, but quarter-tones, and trills upon a single note, something like the *tremolo* of an organ, and neither of these can, by our system, be properly expressed on paper; they also frequently adopt, in singing, the intonations of common conversation, in a manner which utterly baffles our power of reproduction.

It is highly probable that the musical scale and system of the ancients, even of the Greeks and Romans, was essentially the same as that now in use in the East. Our musical notation, and the philosophical principles of the art as practiced among us, have evidently an origin comparatively modern,* and the very terms employed reveal the fact that we owe the present system to the Italian people. The close resemblance between the musical instruments of the ancients and those of the modern Orientals seem to indicate that they adopted the same unsound musical principles, and that these prevented progress; while modern Europe, having placed the subject on a proper foundation, has in consequence progressed during the past three hundred years to a wonderful degree in the musical art, both as to composition and the perfection of its instruments. Not so with the East: it has remained *in statu quo;* and there is little doubt that essentially the same melodies are still in use, performed on the same instruments, and accompanying the same dances, whether secular or religious, as in the days of the Pharaohs, or the kings of Judah, Assyria, and Babylon.

The musical instruments of the East may be divided into two classes—those which are played out-of-doors, and such as are used mostly in the house. The former are loud and shrill, and are confined principally to military music and the rural districts. They consist of various kinds of drums and of the

* The musical scale of modern Europe was invented by Guido d'Arezzo, an Italian, in the eleventh century.—MICHAUD, "Biographie Universelle."

"zoornà," or hautboy, whose shrill notes can be heard at a great distance, generally accompanied by the beating of the "davool," or bass-drum. Our illustration shows the form of the hautboy, and the manner in which it is played. It requires

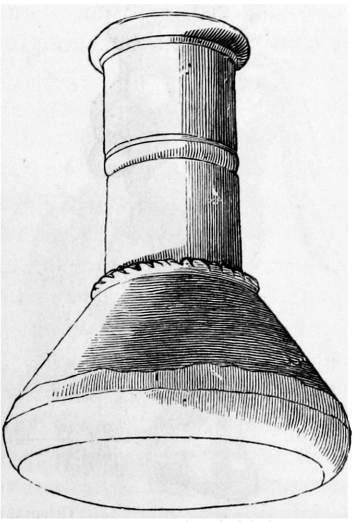


The Modern Zoornà and Davool.

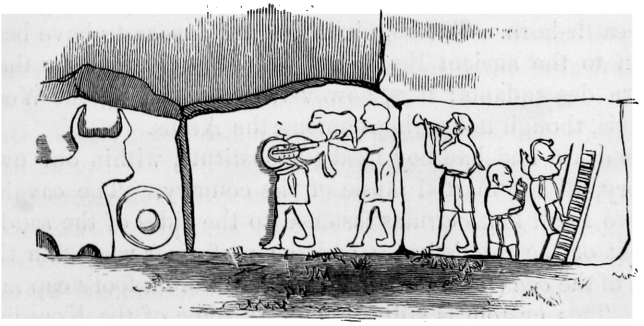
a great deal of wind, so that the cheeks of the performer are usually quite inflated. The drum here represented is one of many kinds, and comes nearest to the European form. One hand (usually the right, for our performer happened to be left-handed) holds a peculiarly shaped drum-stick, well represented in our picture, while the other uses a long, thin, tapering rod, which touches at once the entire length of the opposite surface. There is another kind of drum, called "darabukkeh" by the Arabs, which is large at one end and small at the other. It is commonly made of pottery, and is held under the left arm while struck alternately by the four fingers of each hand. This drum has been found in Egyptian tombs, and is represented on Egyptian and Assyrian monuments.*

* Bonomi, p. 409, fig. 203; Wilkinson, vol. i., p. 93, fig. 105; p. 98, fig. 107.

When a public work is to be done, such as building a new bridge, or opening a new road in these days of modern improvements, the Government makes no appropriation for it. The district is taxed to pay for the material, and every village and town in the neighborhood is required to furnish its quota of workmen gratis. Labor thus extorted is not carried on with much spirit, so that, in order to excite the workmen and put them in a good humor, performers on the drum and hautboy are called into requisition, and employed from morning till night in making the greatest possible din. A similar practice is illustrated by the sculptures of an extremely ancient monument found in Phrygia, near the centre of Asia Minor, representing the erection of a temple; the workmen are entertained with the music of the hautboy, and the lute, and the tricks of a monkey.* On such occasions the bag-



The modern Darabukkeh.



Ancient Musicians and Showmen entertaining Workmen.

pipe is sometimes employed instead of the hautboy. This instrument differs somewhat from that used by the peasantry

* "Travels in Asia Minor," vol. ii., pp. 131–140.



Oriental Bagpipe.

of Scotland, Italy, and Bulgaria, which, besides the main pipe, has one or more others for the accompaniment of a drone. The Oriental bagpipe consists of an entire sheep-skin, untanned and divested of its wool. This the performer holds in his arms, and presses it, while at the same time he blows into it. The music is produced by a double reed with holes, ending in a short cattle-horn. The bagpipe does not appear to have been known to the ancient Egyptians, and is rarely used by their modern descendants; it is, however, found throughout Western Asia, though not perhaps among the Arabs.

The drum and hautboy used to constitute, within our own memory, all the martial music of the country. The cavalry had two small kettle-drums fastened to the sides of the saddle in front of the rider's knees, and the performer was often the clown of the *oda* (room), or regiment, who wore a fool's cap and bells. This custom is still kept up by some of the Koordish chiefs. The military music of the ancient Egyptians appears to have consisted chiefly of the drum and hautboy, for their soldiers are often represented performing upon these instruments, and the Hebrews most probably used the same.

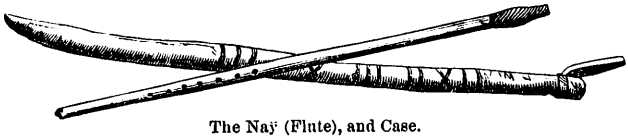
Martial dancing is performed at the sound of the above-men-



Ancient Egyptian military Music.

tioned instruments, and is at present confined to the rural districts, and the irregular militia, or *Bashi Bozooks* (literally, headless). It is performed by two armed men, who simulate a single combat or duel, drawing their swords, and seeming most furiously engaged in mortal strife. There is no singing during the performance. We shall speak of the martial dances peculiar to some tribes in another chapter.

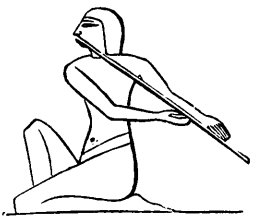
Carrying out the distinction we have ventured to make between out-of-door and indoor music, we now proceed to describe the instruments of gentle sound commonly accompanied by the voice. The wind-instruments are few, and confined to several kinds of flute. Of these the "naÿ" is often, though not exclusively, employed in religious services. It is a reed about



The Naÿ (Flute), and Case.

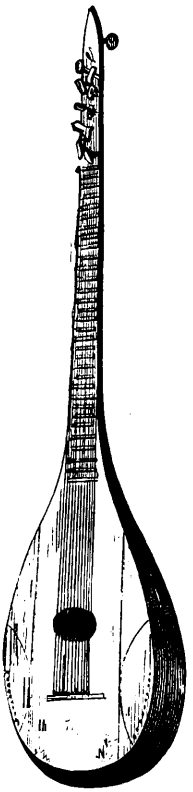
eighteen inches long, pierced throughout evenly, and having six holes for the notes. It is extremely difficult, for any one not used to it, to produce with it any sound whatever, for it is played by blowing in a peculiar manner upon the sharp edge of the upper end of the instrument, which is often made of horn, and it is held somewhat sideways for this purpose. This instrument occurs on many of the Egyptian monuments, and is represented as being played precisely as now. It is also wor-

thy of note that both the ancient and the modern Orientals, when playing on the naÿ, hold the right hand nearest to the mouth;* this is also the case with the bagpipe and the flageolet. Europeans, on the contrary, place the left hand nearest the face in performing on similar instruments.



Ancient Egyptian Performer on the Naÿ.

Besides the naÿ, there are several kinds of flageolets and a shrill flute used in Egypt, and called "zummárah" and "argool." They are of various sizes, sometimes double, and resemble the bagpipe in sound.



The Tamboora, or Lute. (1 Sam. xvi., 23.)

Let us now speak of the stringed instruments. The "tamboora" is a sort of guitar, of various sizes and shapes, generally used throughout the East, and largely figured upon both Egyptian and Assyrian monuments.†

In its most complete and perfect form, this instrument is three feet nine inches long, has ten strings of fine wire, and forty-seven stops. It is played with a plectrum, and is often inlaid with mother-of-pearl and valuable woods. It is oftener, however, of smaller size and less costly materials. With three or six strings it is called "sadz," and is the usual companion and solace of the guardsman in his little mud-hut at the narrow mountain pass, and of the policeman in the town, who hangs it up on the wall beside his weapons above his little divan. It is represented, in these plainer forms, on many of the monuments of ancient Egypt, for it seems to have been a great favorite with her people, though it has wholly disappeared from among their posterity.‡ Even the original of the banjo has been found at Thebes,§ with "the wooden body covered with

* Lane, vol. ii., p. 69.

† Bonomi, p. 262, figs. 115, 116; p. 406, fig. 200; Wilkinson, vol. i., p. 89, fig. 100. ‡ Ibid., vol. i., p. 124, figs. 138, 139, etc. § Ibid., vol. i., p. 125, fig. 140.

leather, the handle extending down to the lower side, and part of the string remaining to which the plectrum was attached;" but it was so far injured that "nothing could be ascertained respecting the pegs or the mode of tightening the strings." This instrument appears to be figured in many of the sculptures,* and the carvings at Euyuk (see illustration on page 609) may be intended to represent it. In Egypt, instead of the tamboora, they have the "ood," which is also common in all the large cities of the East. It is a guitar two feet long, and somewhat bulky, the under part being rounded off and ribbed, instead of flat, as with us. The neck is short,



The Ood, or Guitar.

and suddenly bends back at an angle of seventy-five degrees; on this part are set the keys which hold the strings, fourteen in all, but set in pairs, two for each note. It is played with a plectrum, and performs both the air and its accompaniment. This instrument and the tamboora are probably correctly called *lute;* but there seems to be no evidence that the ood was known to the ancients; on the other hand, the harp, which was so common among the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Hebrews,† has wholly disappeared from the entire East.

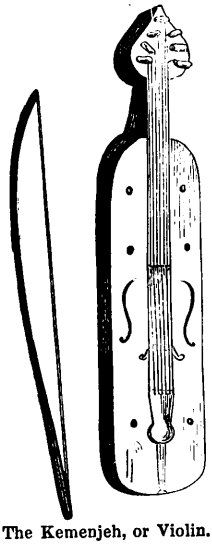
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* Wilkinson, vol. i., p. 90, fig. 101; p. 130, fig. 144, etc.

† Gen. xxxi.. 27: 1 Sam. xvi.. 23: Psa. lxxxi.. 2. etc.

A peculiar interest attaches to the tamboora, or lute, from the fact that it was the favorite instrument of "the sweet Singer of Israel," with which he soothed Saul's troubled spirit, and accompanied his own voice, as is still done by Oriental bards.*

There are several kinds of violin, all of which are called "kemenjeh," a Persian word, signifying "bow instrument." The form of it, given in the annexed illustration, approaches nearest to our violin; it has six strings, and, like every variety of the kemenjeh, is held in the same manner as the bass-viol or violoncello with us. In the southern parts of the country—in Syria, Palestine, Arabia, and Egypt—the body of the instrument is made of a cocoa-nut shell, pierced with small holes, and having about one-quarter cut away, and the opening covered with the skin of a fish, upon which rests the bridge. It has but two chords, composed of horse-hair, and below the instrument, which is three feet long, is a rod pointed with iron, upon which it rests while being played.



The Kemenjeh, or Violin.

The "kanoon" is the original of our piano, both being probably derived from the lyre and the harp, whence the piano was first called a harpsichord. This instrument consists of a box two inches in depth and of an irregular form, its greatest length being thirty-nine inches, and its width sixteen. There are only twenty-four notes, and, like the piano, each note has three strings, which are tuned with a key. The sounding-board lies under the strings, and is perforated, and covered with fish-skin where the bridge rests. The performer lays the instrument on his knees, and strikes the chords with the forefinger of each hand, to which is fastened a plectrum of horn. Another form of this instrument, called "santûr," is a double kanoon, and comes still nearer to our piano; the strings are of wire, and only double; they are struck with wooden hammers held in the

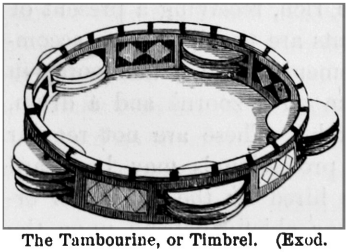
* Smith's "Bible Dictionary." See *Harp.*

hands. When used in a procession, this instrument is suspended from the neck by means of a cord.

Besides these stringed instruments, and yet belonging to the same category, is the "tambourine," or timbrel, called "tar" in Arabic, which may be found in nearly every house. It is a very ancient and favorite form of the drum and cymbal combined, and is much used both in religious and in secular dances. It is held in the left hand, and is struck by the fingers of the right, while the belt of tin pieces attached to the frame-work contribute their jingle to the music. The tambourine is figured in many Egyptian and Assyrian sculptures, being held precisely as now;* and frequent references in the Scriptures show that it was commonly employed both in religious performances† and on secular occasions.‡ The castanets, or "sagat," are of brass, and used chiefly by professional dancers. They are not, however, in so general use in the East as in Spain. They are doubtless very



The Kanoon, or Santùr.



The Tambourine, or Timbrel. (Exod. xv., 20.)

* Wilkinson, vol. i., p. 92, fig. 103; p. 112, fig. 121; Bonomi, p. 407, fig. 201.
† Exod. xv., 20; 2 Sam. vi., 5; Psa. cxlix., 3; cl., 4.
‡ Judg. xi., 34; Job xxi., 12; Psa. lxviii., 25.

ancient, though we have no allusion to them. There is among the Egyptian remains a sculpture of a man using clappers,* instruments now known only in Persia, where they are called "spoons."†



Oriental brass Castanets.

The musical instruments enumerated in Daniel iii., 5, are mostly still in use at the present time; yet some of them have become obsolete. The cornet is a brass trumpet manufactured in the country, and used in martial music. We have described several kinds of flute, both single and double. The harp is no longer in use, nor the "psaltery," which is a smaller instrument of the same kind;‡ they have been replaced by the ood, which gives a richer sound, and is more portable. The "sackbut" is a tamboora, and the "dulcimer" a kanoon, or santûr.§



Assyrian and Egyptian Tambourine-players.

Music is mostly cultivated and performed by those who make it their profession and means of living, though many of them pursue some other calling at the same time. They go about, two or three together, on great festival days, like the Bairam of the Muslims, and Easter or Christmas with the Christians, and perform at the doors of the rich, receiving a present of money or food. Their instruments are usually a naÿ, accompanied by a tambourine, or a kemenjeh, and a tamboora; in the country districts they perform on a zoornà and a drum, or a zummarah and a darabukkeh. These are not regular performers, but beggars. The professionals may be heard at a public café, where they are hired by the cafejys in order to attract customers; but they chiefly depend upon the patronage of the rich, on occasions of special festivities. Some

* Wilkinson, vol. i., p. 100, fig. 109. † Morier, "First Journey," p. 113.

‡ A small harp is still used in religious worship by the Abyssinian clergy.—"Magasin Pittoresque," 1858, p. 196. § Bonomi, p. 405.



An Oriental Orchestra. (Dan. iii., 5.)

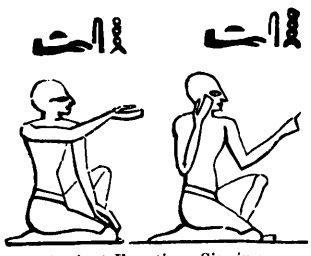
wealthy people, however, engage them at their houses evening after evening, and almost always entertain company. A band of musicians, when complete, usually comprises the following instruments: a kemenjeh; a nay, or a double flute; a tamboora, or ood; a kanoon, or santûr; and sometimes a darabukkeh, the number being increased by doubling either or the whole. They usually accompany their performances with the voice, one of them at least being a singer. This latter is commonly a young lad. He carries the solos, while the rest of the band join in the choruses. The accompanying picture is a good illustration of such a group of musicians.

And here let us add a word concerning the songs of the East, a subject of which we may speak the more briefly, since that portion referring to Egypt has been amply discussed by one of the most accurate of modern Oriental travelers.* We are safe in making the general statement that Orientals are very fond of music. They readily catch a melody, and sing it without instruction. Mothers soothe their infants with plaintive lullabies; children accompany their games with melodious rhymes; they swing under the mulberry-trees and sing a traditionary song with solo and chorus; the muezzin chants the call to prayers five times a day from the top of the minareh, and the church beadle in similar tones exhorts to matins, as he passes along the streets at early dawn, the pavement resounding to the strokes of his heavy stick. The venders of all manner of eatables and drinkables, and indeed of every species of manufacture, extol the quality of their wares in musical cadences. In no other country is this done to a similar extent. The priest, whether Christian, Muslim, Jew, or Gentile, chants his service, while the congregation accompany him with a continuous drone upon the key-note. Among all sects the rite of baptism or of circumcision, of marriage or burial, is accompanied by music and singing. The traveler, as he pursues his journey, singly or in a company, over hill and through lonely vale, enjoys less the beauties of nature than his own or his comrade's song. In short, no opportunity is lost by these people to gratify their natural fondness for music. They go soberly at it, not lightly as the Greeks, the Italians, or even

* Lane, vol. ii., pp. 74–83.

the Spaniards; and their thorough enjoyment of it is plainly seen in their earnest looks, their mental abstraction, and sometimes their involuntary sighs and tears. This trait is universal, and a stranger visiting an Eastern Protestant place of worship during the time of service can not but be struck with the earnest singing of every man, woman, and child, as they all repeat hymns which all can both read and understand.

Some professionals, while singing, fan their mouths with a sheet of paper, to increase their wind;* while most place the right hand upon the right cheek and the thumb upon the gullet, in order the better to modulate the voice. This position is so well expressed by one of the Egyptian sculptures that we give it, both as a graphic illustration of the subject, and also to show how minutely the moderns have copied the practices of their ancestors.



Ancient Egyptians Singing.

There are many popular songs, but their authors and the date of their composition are unknown. They are rehearsed by one generation to another, and thus are preserved from oblivion. They constitute the stock in trade of the professional singers, who make a livelihood by repeating them to their audiences. Their character is usually either tragical, martial, sentimental, or comical, and many of them display not a little poetical talent. But there are also modern compositions, the effusions of a class of men who answer to the bards of the Middle Ages in Europe, and sing their own poems, accompanying themselves on the tamboora, or lute, or assisted by a band of performers. These poems are caught up by others, and the best singers are ever adding new compositions to their store. For instance, soon after the dreadful massacre of the Nestorians by the Koords a song was composed in honor of their infamous leader, Bedr Khan Bey, which was for a time very popular among the Muslims throughout the country. The refrain was "Akh, Bedr Khan Bey!" In like manner, not long after the close of the Crimean war, we listened to a song of unwonted

* Morier, vol. ii., p. 92.

popularity, according to which the English and French armies would have been utterly destroyed by the Russians but for the timely interference of the brave Turkish legions under Eumer Pasha. Thus do the common people of the East learn history; so Homer at once delighted and instructed the ancient Greeks, and the Hebrew prophets rehearsed the history of their national glory to their people.* The customs described in the foregoing paragraphs generally prevail through the whole extent of Western Asia, from the slopes of the Caucasus to the banks of the Nile.

But there are also improvisers, who compose their verses as they sing, whether their musical performance constitute the whole of the entertainment or be accompanied by dancing. Their theme is drawn from the current events of the day, or the personal prowess or other attractions of some one of the company.† The best improvisers generally go through a special training to fit them for their peculiar calling. The aspirant to such honors attaches himself to a professional singer, either as a servant or as an assistant, his wages consisting of an occasional suit of clothes, his food, and a bakshish from the customers. He thus places himself in the way of storing his mind with sonnets and other poems, practices his voice, and takes lessons in Arabic and Persian poetry from a regular teacher, or *khojah.* He soon begins to practice extempore composition, and at the age of twenty-five or thirty years his education is complete. Thenceforth he is an *ashùk*, literally, a *lover*, which means an enthusiast fired by the love of poetry. He now sets forth on an extensive tour on foot, going from city to city and from village to village, challenging any rival to contend with him in extemporaneous effusions. Most of these men are afflicted with blindness, a result, it is popularly believed, of the semi-frenzy to which their minds are worked up during the composition of their poems. Success and the admiration of their hearers seem to be their only object, for the contributions elicited at the close of each performance are barely sufficient for their simplest wants. Hence they are always poor, and depend nearly as much upon the charity of

* See the Song of Miriam and Moses, Exod. xv., 1-21; the Song of Deborah and Baruch, Judg. v., 1-31; and Psa. cv., cvi., cxxxvi., etc

† Lynch, p. 295.

the public as upon the proceeds of their calling. It has been thought by some that Homer was not the name of an individual, but of a class of bards, corresponding to the modern *ashùks*, and that the poems which bear his name are the product of a mixed authorship. We shall not attempt to dispel the mystery which has baffled the efforts of so many learned men. But the existence of such a class of bards as we have described, not only throughout Western Asia, but particularly in the region where Homer is said to have dwelt, is a fact which ought not to be lost sight of in the discussion of the question.

We have described the instrumental music of the East, and the singing, and shall now speak of the dancing—both of professional dancing and of that in which people engage for their own amusement. To the latter, doubtless, belong many dances of a remote origin, chiefly found in isolated rural districts. Here the pleasure does not consist in simply looking on, as in professional dancing; many join in the performance, and as the singing and the music grow more animated, the spectators leap to their feet, and relieve the weary ones, or keep up the excitement by clapping their hands in unison. Sometimes the sexes form separate groups, but often they mingle, holding each other by the hand. Among the Greeks of the islands and the sea-shore, the national dance, or the *sirto* (incorrectly called the *romaïka*), is still practiced, in spite of foreign innovations. A man leads forth some maiden to the dance with a handkerchief, while other men and women come forward and join the pair, taking hold of the maiden's hand and dancing in a line with her. Presently they leave the couple to finish the performance alone in a variety of figures, accompanied by a graceful waving of their handkerchiefs.

When the improvisatore praises the lady to her partner's satisfaction, he rewards him with the smallest of gold coins, first wetting it with his lips, and then fastening it to the forehead of the singer, who wears it as a trophy of his success.

Among the wild Circassians and Nogay, the dances, even of the women, always partake, more or less, of the martial spirit of the people. The sexes either dance separately or join in the same performance.* The Armenians and the Nestorian Chris-

* Ussher, p. 150.

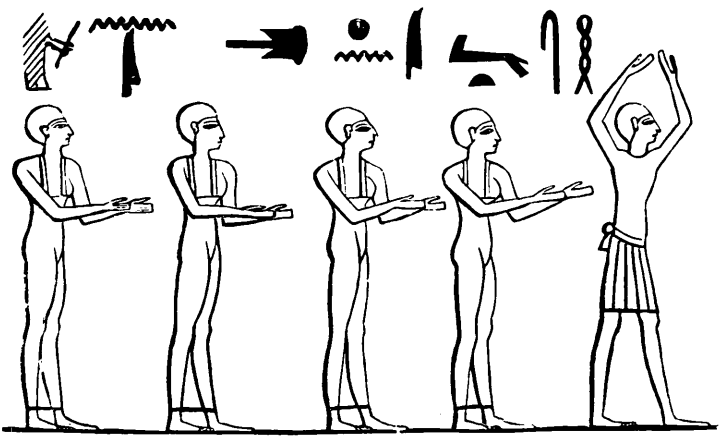
tians of Koordistan often engage in public dances, both at weddings and on other festive occasions; they "form a line composed alternately of a man and a woman, who interlock the fingers of their hands; the line then takes the form of a semicircle, and the dancers move a few yards forward and backward, with steps measured according to the music, accompanied with clapping of hands by the spectators, and the jingle of the metal ornaments worn by the girls who join in the dance."* Married women seldom take part in these public dances, the performers being usually marriageable maidens, as was the case among the Hebrews.†

The Arabs of the Desert are particularly fond of this amusement, but the women of one tribe are not easily persuaded to dance before the men of another.‡ They form a circle about the musicians, holding each other by the hand, and move slowly round, at first shuffling the feet, and putting the body into a variety of attitudes. As the music quickens, however, the movement becomes more active and lively; they stamp with their feet, yell their war-cry, and jump lustily as they hasten around with accelerated speed. Those people, like all the tribes of Western Asia, excite the dancers by the clapping of hands, as was done by the ancient Egyptians.§

The martial dance is especially popular among the Arabs, but the excitable temperament of that people makes it not a little dangerous, when two warriors, belonging to different tribes, are pitted against each other. At the beginning, indeed, they go slowly through the movements and steps of the war-dance, but ere long the music and the shouts of the spectators excite them to such a pitch that the by-standers are obliged to interfere, and exchange their shields and naked cimeters for stout staves, with which they belabor each other most unmercifully, every successful hit eliciting shouts of applause from the tribe to which the successful competitor belongs.

On all these occasions the cry of the tahlil is set up by the women during the height of the excitement. It is a peculiar sound, somewhat resembling the cry of a jackal, only much louder and continuous. It is produced by a peculiar modula-

* Perkins, p. 269.
† Judg. xxi., 21; Jer. xxxi., 13.
‡ Layard, vol. i., p. 113.
§ Lynch, p. 295.



Dancing to the clapping of Hands.

tion of the voice, effected by the rapid vibrations of the tongue, and certain movements of the hand before the mouth. The women set up this cry upon every occasion of unusual excitement, whether grave or gay, but the men use it only as a war-cry, and the sound exerts a magic power upon Arabs, Koords, and Circassians, alike rousing them to an uncontrollable pitch of frenzy. There appear to be distinct allusions to this peculiar cry in several passages of Scripture, as, for instance, in connection with dancing,* with rejoicing,† with lamentation,‡ and with death;§ and these are the very occasions on which the tahlil is heard at the present day.

The style of dancing we have now described was doubtless practiced by the Hebrews. It was not banished by that of the professional almehs, as appears to have been the case anciently, and certainly now in Egypt. Jephthah's daughter testified her joy at her father's victory by going forth to meet him, dancing with her companions;‖ and David, after his victory over Goliath, was met with dances and songs of praise.¶ But the professional dancing of single performers, which has nearly banished these innocent pastimes from the large cities, is of a very different character. As it has existed in Egypt from time immemorial, and is copiously pictured on the monuments

* Exod. xxxii., 17–19.
† 1 Sam. iv., 5.
‡ 1 Sam. iv., 13; Luke xxiii., 27.
§ Mark v., 38, 39.
‖ Judg. xi., 34.
¶ 1 Sam. xviii., 6, 7.



An Egyptian Almeh.

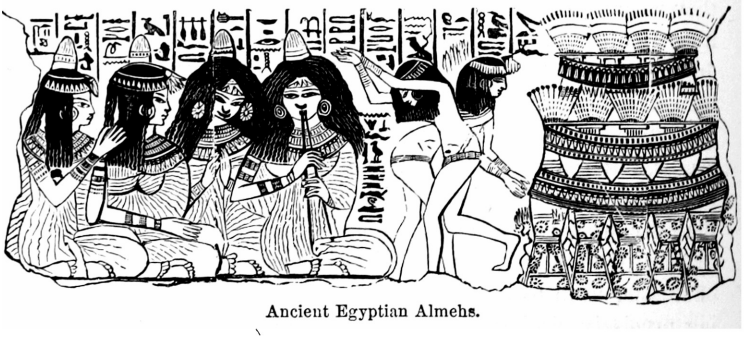
of that country, even upon some that are older than the Exodus of the Israelites, it is highly probable that it was thence introduced into Western Asia and India. Still it appears to have long been confined to the voluptuaries of the great monarchies of Assyria and Egypt. In the latter country it is, at the present day, practiced by the almehs, who are girls mostly belonging to the tribe of Ghawazy, and brought up for the venal profession, in which they continue even after marriage.* They dance unveiled either in public before a crowd, or in private before men or women, and are accompanied by musicians, usually their relatives, often their husbands, fathers, or mothers, who share in the gains of their debasing occupation. It is very common among the rich in Cairo to call in one of these women to dance before their guests after dinner, and scenes of the most revolting character not unfrequently ensue. These women are considered the handsomest in Egypt, both in feature and form. When dancing before a private company, they wear the ample shintian, or trowsers, and in addition only a tunic of gauze-like texture. Libations of wine and arrack are offered them by the spectators, of which they freely partake, and, laying aside the last vestige of modesty, the consequences may be easily imagined.† These people call themselves Arabs, but they strikingly resemble the gypsies in their features, and, like them, have a language of their own, and adopt the prevailing religion of the country in which they live. The gypsies of Moldavia and Wallachia, also found in some parts of Russia, seem to be the counterpart of these Ghawazies, leading precisely similar lives. They are the most popular musicians, and practice the same dances and dissolute ways. It is a happy circumstance for Western Asia that the gypsies that are settled upon her soil do not exert the same demoralizing influence as the Ghawazies, being distinguished chiefly by their thieving propensities, and their life of squalor and filth.

It is possible that the dance of the almeh may have a more Southern origin than the banks of the Nile. Arago describes it as existing in its grossest form among the slaves of Madagascar, brought over from the opposite shore of Africa. There both sexes participate in the shameless performance, whereas

* Lane, vol. ii., p. 86.

† Ibid., p. 88.

in Egypt and Western Asia it is a woman alone that dances, or a lad in feminine apparel. Still, both the dance and the songs accompanying it are so objectionable that few respectable persons are willing to countenance them by their presence. These facts exhibit in its true light the narrative contained in Matt. xiv., 6–11. Herodias, desperately bent on compassing the death of John the Baptist, decks her own daughter in the apparel of a harlot, and sends her into the hall of feasting to perform the shameless almeh dance, in the presence of the king and his reveling companions, castanets in hand, and accompanied by the royal music. A better illustration we could not have of the moral degradation of mother and daughter, and of the whole court. Similar practices were common in ancient Egypt and Palestine,* in confirmation of which we copy a sculpture, found upon an Egyptian tomb, which represents almeh dancers performing in the presence of a promiscuous assembly.



Ancient Egyptian Almehs.

The story of Queen Vashti is an illustration of the feelings of well-bred Oriental women with regard to appearing unveiled before men, and indicates, therefore, the view they entertain of the performances of the almehs. The king, being merry with wine, summoned the queen to appear in the presence of the people and princes, in order to show them her beauty, but she refused to obey his call, and was consequently deposed.† Rawlinson supposes the Ahasuerus of the Book of Esther to be the famous Xerxes, who, having just returned from his disastrous expedition into Greece, on his way robbed the Temple of

* Isa. xxiii., 16.

† Esth. i., 10, 11, 12, 19.

Belus, at Babylon, of its immense treasures, and made this display of his wealth as a sort of cover to his losses. The conduct of the Persian king in trampling upon the customs of his country likewise accords with the character of Xerxes better than with that of any of his predecessors or successors.* It may also be that the king, having just experienced the superiority of Western civilization in military affairs, conceived a vague desire to introduce some of its peculiarities into the East, and went about it by introducing startling innovations in the relations of the sexes, as is done by some at the present day—a subject upon which Orientals are most sensitive.

We have already mentioned the fact that in Western Asia, unlike the custom prevailing in Egypt, women rarely dance before men. Professional dancers who perform in public are boys or young men attired in feminine apparel. A precisely similar custom prevailed among the ancient Greeks and Romans at their bacchanalian feasts.†

Besides the dance there is another mode of entertainment, practiced by the ancients as well as the moderns, in which female slaves are the performers. When the Sultan of Turkey or the Shah of Persia retires to his harim, and especially during his meals, a number of young girls, especially trained for the purpose, perform all manner of gymnastic exercises for his amusement, whether singly, by twos, or by threes, while others toss and catch several balls at once, or exhibit various other feats of dexterity. These are, however, witnessed by the sovereign alone, and occasionally by female visitors to the harim. This custom existed in ancient Assyria and Egypt, for it is abundantly illustrated on the monuments of the latter country, and repeatedly alluded to in history.‡

It is still the custom among the grandees, as in Europe in the Middle Ages, to keep an ugly dwarf for the purpose of merriment; these dwarfs are often shrewd and witty, and manage to lay up a good deal of property. The dwarf of Sultan Mahmood had an uncommonly large head, even for a dwarf. He was very cunning, and quite a pet of his master's. Abdool-Mejid's dwarf had a handsome face, and his photograph was

* Herodotus, vol. iv., p. 215.

† Lucian, quoted by Prideaux, vol. iv., p. 75.

‡ Wilkinson, vol. i., pp. 198–201.

quite popular at one time at Constantinople. The same custom prevailed in ancient Egypt.*

Theatrical representations do not exist in the East. There is an approach to them in Egypt,† and still more in Persia, in the yearly commemoration of the death of Hassan and Hosein, the sons of Ali. The same appears to have been the case in ancient times, the theatre having been introduced and sustained only during the domination of the Macedonian and Roman powers.‡ This is not the case, however, in countries still farther to the east, the people of China and Japan being more devoted to this kind of amusement than any other nation in the world.

Puppet-shows in the style of Punch and Judy are, however, common. These are called *karageuz* ("the black eye"), and are exhibited by a man concealed within a portable screen. The exhibition is low and vulgar, yet it is patronized by many Muslims, and may not unfrequently be noticed in front of the windows of a pasha's harim for the benefit of the ladies, who sit behind the lattice, as the showman can not be admitted within.§

There are also athletic sports, in which professional wrestlers exhibit their strength and skill on occasions of special festivity. They wear only small, close-fitting drawers, to leave no hold for their antagonist, and smear their bodies with oil;‖ and, advancing cautiously, they seek to throw the other upon his back, which always ends the contest. In some towns volunteer exhibitions of this kind are still given every Friday, after mid-

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* Wilkinson, vol. i., p. 204. † Lane, vol. ii., p. 100.

‡ See a very complete and finely-illustrated account of these Persian theatricals in the "Tour du Monde," by Vereschaguine, for 1869, vol. i., pp. 258–278.

§ Thevenot, p. 35.

‖ Deut. xxv., 11, 12, is explained by the fact that wrestlers are habitually on the alert to avail themselves of a chance to disable an antagonist by the means interdicted in this passage: the prohibition implies that the practice was common. "The Lacedemonians were the first who performed their exercises naked, stripping themselves in public, and anointing with oil before they entered the lists; though the custom had before prevailed for the champions to wear scarfs about their loins, and it is only a few years that they have become wholly disused. But even yet among some barbarians, most especially those of Asia, where the matches of boxing and wrestling are in repute, the combatants engage with scarfs round their loins" (Thucydides, "Peloponnesian War," bk. i.). There is now no Oriental nation that practices boxing.

day, or at the festival of Bairam, the spot chosen being the trench around the city wall, or some other locality where the sport may be witnessed by a large number of spectators. Wrestling was similarly practiced by the ancients, and the various episodes of the game are well represented on the sculptures of the Beni Hassan.* Nor are these the only exhibitions of strength or skill made on such occasions. Dwarfs are sometimes set to fighting, each endeavoring to throw his antagonist into a tank of cold water.† Even until a recent date there have been exhibitions of fights between lions, bears, bulls, rams, and cocks; but men never engaged in them, as in the contests of the Roman circus, in the bull-fights of Spain, or even in those with elephants in India.‡ Ram-fights are still in vogue in Persia, as well as camel-fights in other parts of Western Asia. (See page 242.)

On great occasions, such as the marriage of the king's daughter, or the circumcision of his son, a variety of games, shows, and other entertainments are gotten up on a large scale to amuse the people. Food is distributed to every comer, and the rich are entertained in curtained tents, spread with carpets and divans.§ Bands of musicians, stationed in different parts of the grounds, fill the air with their din. Young men, disguised in female attire, with plaited hair and effeminate mien,‖ dance here and there, to the great delight of the crowd; meanwhile rope-walkers exhibit feats unsurpassed by the most skillful European acrobats. They ascend a rope extended at an angle of forty-five degrees, tie their hands to a ladder, and leap down with it, catching themselves from falling to the ground by the power of their wrists. They then walk on this rope, forward and backward, on high-heeled shoes, or with their feet set in saucepans, carrying a child upon their backs; and, finally, hanging from the rope by their feet, they load and prime a flint-gun, and fire it in that position at an egg set on the ground beneath them, piercing it with the ball. The rope on which they perform these feats is stretched much higher from the ground than is done in Europe.¶ Other men perform leaps and somersaults with unsheathed knives and

* Wilkinson, vol. i., p. 205.
† Morier, vol. i., p. 113.
‡ Tavernier, p. 152.
§ Esth. i., 5–8.
‖ Layard, vol. ii., p. 257.
¶ Morier, vol. i., p. 113–116.

swords in their hands and mouths. Some swallow and then disgorge great quantities of water; while others take burning coals of fire into their mouths. The entire display ends with fire-works of great beauty and ingenuity, for Orientals are unsurpassed in such exhibitions, while the proverbially clear and dry atmosphere of Western Asia greatly contributes to their success.

CHAPTER IX.

GOVERNMENT, MILITARY AFFAIRS, AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

THE tenacity with which Orientals cling to the traditions of their ancestors is especially conspicuous in their form of government. The idea has ever pervaded their minds that the head of the state is of divine origin, or that he at least enjoys the special favor of the Deity. This notion is traceable to the original patriarchal constitution of society still prevalent, not only among the nomads, but to a great extent among all classes of the people. Their system of government, despite its many and glaring defects, deserves indeed the name of patriarchal more than any other. An Oriental republic or constitutional monarchy would, so far as we are aware, be quite "a new thing under the sun." The free cities of Asia Minor were Greek, and could not so long have maintained their independence without the aid of the mother country. The Hebrews had a sort of commonwealth for the space of three hundred years; but it was a theocracy, which could not have been maintained without the frequent supernatural interpositions of the Deity. It can only be regarded as a disciplinary anomaly, and a stepping-stone to something else; it had to give way before the pressing call for a king.* Nor did God establish over the Hebrews a constitutional monarchy in which the king shares the power with the representatives of the people; on the contrary, he allowed the new sovereign to act in all respects according to "the manner of all the kings" of Asia,† only requiring that he be their own countryman, chosen and appointed of God.‡ All Oriental sovereigns at the present day claim a divine appointment.

The first thing worthy of note respecting royalty in the East is the peculiar system adopted with regard to the order of the

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* 1 Sam. viii., 5. † 1 Sam. viii., 11-18. ‡ Deut. xvii., 15.

succession. In the patriarchal system, when the sheikh dies, the oldest member of his family, whether brother, son, or nephew, is made sheikh in his place, unless he be deemed unfit by the rest of the family to take charge of their common interests. So in the royal household the king's brothers, sons, and nephews are considered equally eligible to the throne, and age or superior fitness commonly decide the question. The choice, however, often depends on the great officers of state, and they select the man from whom they have the most to hope. Regents are dispensed with by this system; for care is taken that the royal family contain some member of mature age, and the history of King Joash is repeated only when a pretender or an enemy attempts to murder all the royal household, as did Queen Athaliah.* In our day, the succession to the throne of Turkey has occurred in the manner we have described; Sultan Mahmood II. succeeded his brother, Moostapha IV., and left the throne to his eldest son, Abdool-Mejid. On the death of the latter, the sceptre was assumed, not by either of his two sons, but by his brother, Abdool-Aziz (the present Sultan of Turkey), who is the second son of Mahmood by another wife; and the present heir-apparent is not the son, but the nephew of Abdool-Aziz, *i. e.*, Moorad Effendi, son of Abdool-Mejid. This rule of succession was also practiced among the Hebrews, though the son was usually placed upon the throne of his father.†

Women are excluded from the succession throughout the East; yet it is an interesting fact that there exists still in Africa‡ a nation called Berber, or Shepherds, who are governed by female sovereigns. They dwell in the mountain region of Abyssinia, and their capital is Mendera.§ The Queen Candace of Acts viii., 27, probably ruled over Nubia, which was formerly governed by women bearing that generic name.‖ Nubia lies upon the Nile above Egypt, and is still by many called Ethiopia.¶

But the element of polygamy mars any rules of succession that might be adopted. There are several sets of children, and

* 2 Chron. xxii., 10–12; xxiii., 1–21; xxiv., 1–3.
† 2 Sam. ii., 8; 2 Chron. xxxvi., 4, 10.
‡ 1 Kings x., 1; Matt. xii., 42.
§ Bruce, vol. ii., pp. 487, 491.
‖ Ibid., p. 115.
¶ Eusebius, "History," bk. ii., chap. ii.

each mother intrigues for the purpose of setting her own upon the throne, and thus attaining the dignity of queen-mother—*valideh sultan.* The old king often declares his preference during his lifetime, and this usually goes far toward deciding the question.* The annals of Eastern empires are filled with accounts of murders perpetrated on such occasions, some kings leaving no less than a hundred children by different wives, most of whom are put to death by the successful aspirant to the throne.† Sometimes, however, their eyes are put out instead, with a hot iron—a practice so common in Persia that the royal children are trained to go blindfold, in anticipation of the possible loss of sight. We have a Scripture example on a somewhat similar occasion: the eyes of King Zedekiah were put out by Nebuchadnezzar at the capture of Jerusalem;‡ for he



Putting out the Eyes of a Prisoner.

had been placed upon the throne by the King of Babylon, and had rebelled against him.§ His children were first killed before his eyes, not only as a punishment, but also to put a final end to the realm. The operation, evidently as common among the people of Mesopotamia as with modern Persians, was performed by the king in person, with a spear, as may be seen in the accompanying picture from a Nineveh slab.

Pretenders to the crown are usually put to death. But Morier relates (vol. ii., p. 351) that Mohammed Zeman Khan, who had laid claim to the crown of Persia, was "placed upon an ass, with his face toward the tail, and the tail in his hand, a

* 1 Kings i., 11-40.
† 1 Kings i., 5, 25; ii., 24, 25.
‡ 2 Kings xxv., 7.
§ 2 Kings xxiv., 20.

mock crown upon his head, armlets upon his arms, and a sword by his side; he was paraded through the camp, the crier proclaiming: 'This is he who wanted to be king!' He was then mocked, insulted, spit upon, and scourged upon the soles of his feet, after which his eyes were put out." How like this, in several particulars, was the treatment received by the Lord of Glory, of whom the Pharisees claimed that he sought to become "King of the Jews!"*

In Syria the cutting out of the tongue has been practiced as the most effectual bar to the assumption of political power.† In Abyssinia, where any physical imperfection is sufficient to debar from the throne, the mutilation consists in the loss of the ears, nose, hands, or feet;‡ and the king's relatives, whom a political revolution might bring to the throne, are ever kept in a cave on the summit of a high mountain.

The titles of Oriental sovereigns are numerous and high-sounding, but the Sultan of Turkey is commonly called "Padishah," and the King of Persia "Shah." Both these rulers are of Tartar origin; but their families have held the thrones of Turkey and Persia for several centuries, and their present occupants have scarcely a drop of Tartar blood flowing in their veins, none but slaves, commonly Circassians, being admitted into the royal harim. The title of "khan" appended to their names is also bestowed upon nobles of high rank, and independent chiefs. But they are commonly called by their principal title, not by their proper name, except to distinguish them from others in the same line. Thus "Pharaoh" was a title, not a name; for it was given indiscriminately to all the sovereigns of Egypt, who were distinguished from each other by their proper names, as Pharaoh-necho.§ About the same time, Agag was the common name of all the kings of Amalek.‖ And after the Macedonian conquest, "Ptolemy" became the title of all the Egyptian kings. So, also, among the Parthians, the name of "Arsaces" was borne by every sovereign. These titles were, perhaps, all originally proper names, and by assuming them the reign of a notable king was, by a sort of fiction, continued in the persons of his successors.

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* Matt. xxvii., 27–31. † Churchill, vol. iii., p. 384. ‡ Bruce, vol. ii., p. 428.
§ 2 Kings xxiii., 29. ‖ Stanley, "Jewish Church," vol. i., p. 156.

In the East, a man's social rank is usually proclaimed by the garments he wears, and the house he occupies. These marks also distinguish the sovereign from his subjects. In describing the glory of Solomon, much is said in the Scriptures of the palaces he built for himself, of the throne on which he sat, and of the wealth of his court. He was the wisest, wealthiest, and greatest not only of all the Hebrew kings, but (in the opinion of the East) of all men; and in describing him the Scriptures give us the Oriental beau-ideal of a sovereign. The monuments of antiquity throw additional valuable light upon the matter, and though we generally confine our illustrations to the modern East, we shall take occasion, as heretofore, to show the unchangeable character of Oriental institutions by comparing the present state of things with the sculptures discovered upon the banks of the Nile and the Tigris.

On approaching the palace of an Eastern sovereign, the first object which attracts the attention of a stranger is the handsome gate-way, the emblem of his power and greatness, to which for this reason a special importance is attached. It is a lofty structure, highly ornamented with rich mouldings, gilded or painted in bright colors, and provided with strong doors, and bars, bolts, locks, and keys. Connected with it are rooms, dungeons, halls for the body-guard, and lofty towers, rendering the structure the strongest part of the fortifications, which completely surround the *saraÿ*, or palace of the king. This gate-way is called at Teheran "Ala Capi" (the Handsome Gate); but at Constantinople, "Bab-i-Humayoon:" we usually call it, after the French, the Sublime Porte; but rendered into Saxon-English, it would be the High Gate. In the common phraseology of the country, the Sultan's or Shah's Gate means the Government of his majesty, and, in a more restricted sense, his personal administration of justice;* for the name points to the early days when the sovereign himself sat in his gate—at once the coolest and the most accessible spot—to receive the petitions of his subjects and redress their wrongs. Even now some of the chief officers sit habitually at this gate, and it is the head-quarters of the imperial guard. There is a niche on either side, where the bleeding heads of those who had incurred

* Morier, vol. ii., p. 135.

the royal displeasure were wont to be deposited and exhibited to the public gaze;* and no longer ago than 1825, after the massacre of the janissaries by Sultan Mahmood, the piles of heads reached to the top of the building.

The first court of the sultan's palace at Constantinople contains a variety of public offices, such as the mint, the armory, a hospital, the royal stables, and the divan, or hall of the grand council. It is also the place of execution of criminals of the highest rank. Under an immense platanus stands a huge stone mortar, in which a Sheikh-ool-Islam, or Muslim high-priest, was pounded to death for his crimes.†

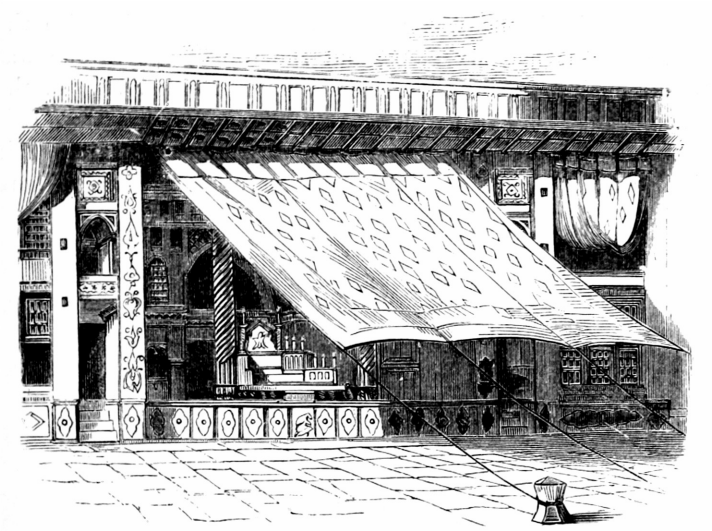
The ancients appear to have attached the same importance as the moderns to the gate of their royal palaces. The Scriptures thus speak of King David's gate in several passages.‡ The same custom appears to have prevailed in Persia.§ The present use of the word gate is also repeatedly met with in the Bible, particularly as applied to God's government and power.‖

What we have said of the sovereign's gate is applicable to those of the pashas or khans (the governors of provinces), to the mudirs and caïmakams of the large cities, and to the sheikhs and aghas of the villages. Each of these keeps an open door, where may be seen his retainers and all such people as have business with him. Hence "The Preacher," describing the power and greatness of the "wisdom" he extols, exclaims, "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors."¶

We have looked upon the entrance to the royal residence; let us now go forward and penetrate the haunts of royalty. We must first notice, what has already been remarked, that the palace, with all the state edifices, is strongly fortified, and able to stand a protracted siege. This was also a custom of the ancients, practiced at Babylon, Nineveh, Shushan, and Persepolis. And the palaces of David and Solomon, built upon Mount Zion, were similarly fortified with walls and towers; and there the kings of Judah held their court, a counterpart in the main of that of the more powerful sultans of Constantinople.

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* 2 Kings x., 8.
† Prov. xxvii., 22.
‡ 2 Sam. xi., 9; xv., 2.
§ Esth. ii., 19; v., 9, 13.
‖ Psa. cxviii., 19; Matt. xvi., 18.
¶ Prov. viii., 34.



Hall of Audience of the Shah of Persia. (1 Kings vii., 7.)

The hall of audience, or throne-room, next demands our attention. In front is a court which, on state occasions, is lined with soldiers in uniform, and filled with courtiers in gala costume. The centre is occupied by a jetting fountain, the delight of Orientals. They are equally fond of pillars. At Teheran these support the roof of the audience-hall, while at Constantinople they also adorn a gallery which surrounds the court. It was so with the palaces of the ancient kings of the East. The former system prevailed at Persepolis in the Shehel-minar, and at Karnak, while most of the ancient temples, but more particularly "Tadmor in the Wilderness," exemplify the latter. Both styles appear to have been adopted in the palace of Solomon. The hall was supported by forty-five pillars, of the height of three common stories;* and surrounding the building outside were "four rows of cedar pillars."

Our sketch of the hall of audience of the Shah of Persia represents it as it has stood for the last two hundred years, since the time of Fethi Ali Shah. The hall long used by the sultans of Turkey at the Seraglio Point, and lately burned, was essentially on the same plan.

* 1 Kings vii., 2–4.

Solomon's throne was "made of ivory, overlaid with the best gold; it had six steps, and the top of the throne was round behind. And there were stays on either side of the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays."* It is generally supposed that this description implies a form of chair similar to ours, in which the feet rest upon a stool. There

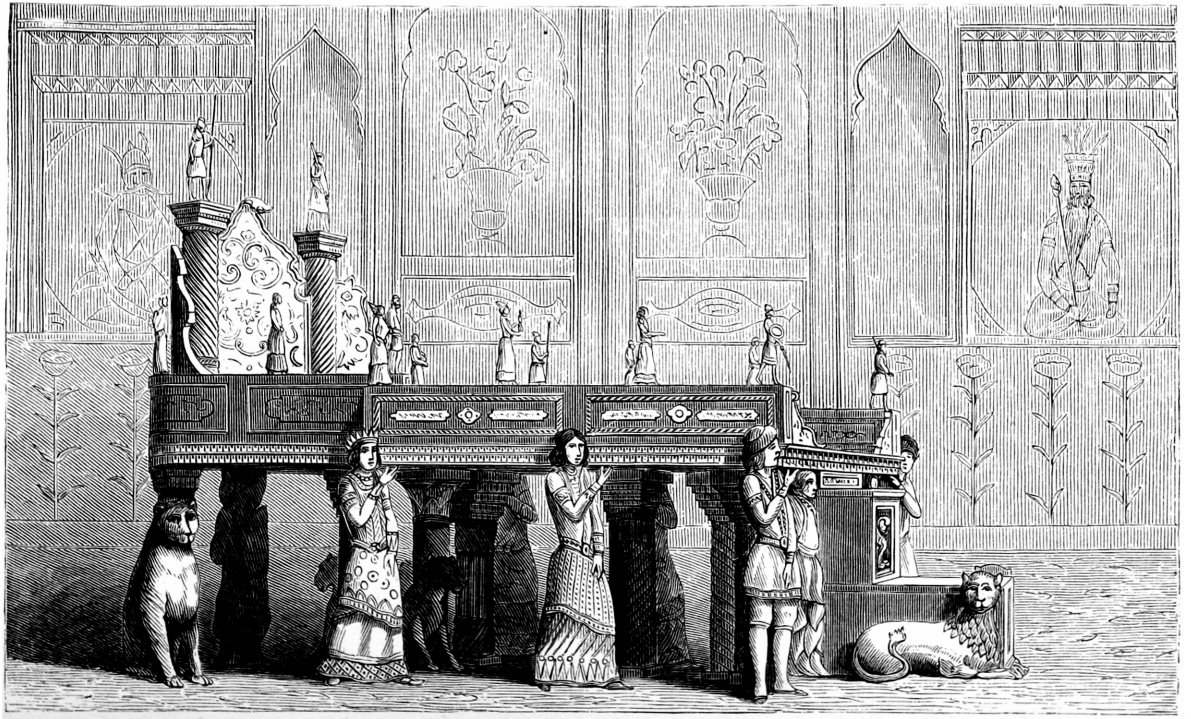


Pharaoh upon his Throne.

were such chairs in Egypt, and we reproduce a picture of Rameses seated upon a throne bearing apparently a close resemblance to that of Solomon, with the exception of some peculiarly Egyptian emblems. The Assyrian kings also sat upon thrones of this kind;† but the ornaments they adopted were the war-horse, and rows of captives. It should, however, be remembered that this mode of sitting has ever been exceptional in the East; and though it can not be denied that princes

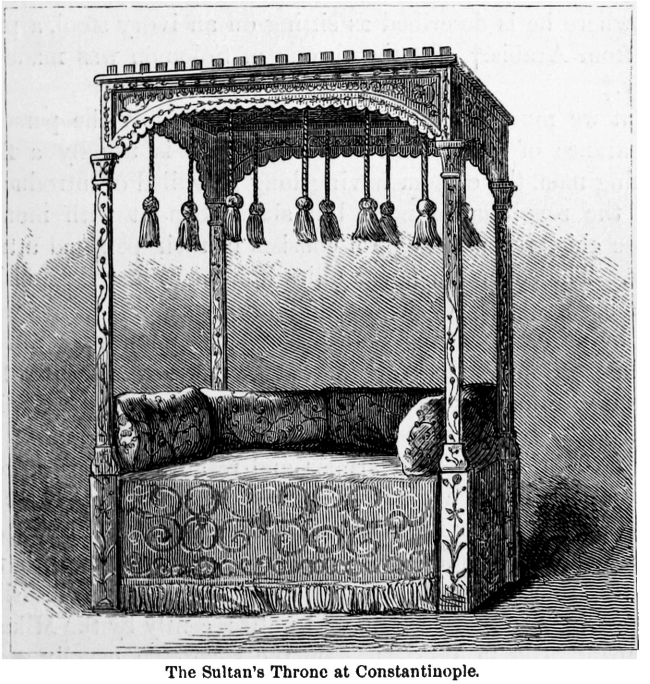
* 1 Kings x., 19.

† Layard, "Nineveh," vol. ii., p. 235.



Throne of the Shah of Persia at Teheran.

sometimes sat in state, after what we call the European mode, yet the analogies of the case favor the supposition that the king's throne was more commonly in the form of a sofa, or divan, upon which he sat cross-legged, like the sultans of Turkey, the shahs of Persia, and all other modern Eastern sovereigns. We reproduce Flandin's picture of the throne of the kings of Persia; it is called "Takht-i-taoos" (the Throne of the Peacock), from representations it bears of that bird, in jewels and precious stones, besides those of lions and human beings.*



The Sultan's Throne at Constantinople.

We have seen the throne long used by the sultans, since burned, and can compare it to nothing but a large bedstead, with high posts or columns of silver-gilt, covered with precious stones, and supporting a rich canopy, from whose ceiling hung balls of burnished gold and horses' tails. Upon the bedstead was spread a mattress with cushions covered with the finest velvet,

* Morier, vol. i., p. 191.

richly embroidered with pearls, precious stones, and diamonds. The prince sat cross-legged upon it, clothed in a suit and pelisse of richest stuffs, and a turban adorned with white herons' feathers set in a costly jewel.

Similar to these was the throne of the king of Abyssinia in the time of Bruce (vol. iii., p. 607). But he also had a small portable "stool of gold," like the *curule* chair used by the Romans; this was, during the Begender war, changed to a similar beautiful one inlaid with gold. So Xerxes is said to have witnessed the naval fight at Salamis, sitting on a golden stool.* Elsewhere he is described as sitting on an ivory stool, a present from Arabia.† So the throne of Solomon was made of ivory.‡

But we must describe a little more minutely the personal appearance of an Eastern sovereign. He is usually a fine-looking man, the custom having long prevailed of introducing into the royal harim none but slaves bought with money, whose chief recommendation consists in their personal attractions. The sovereign never allies himself by marriage either with his subjects§ or with neighboring princes.‖ We were told by an eminent English artist engaged upon a portrait of the late Sultan Abdool-Mejid, that he had never seen so fine a mouth; to use his own expression, it was a perfect "Cupid's bow." These princes usually look somewhat effeminate; for they no longer lead their armies, and resign the reins of government mostly to a grand vizier and other officers of state. The kings of the far East have often screened themselves from the sight of their subjects, in order to impress them with the idea that they belonged to a higher class of beings, as invisible as the Deity—a practice followed until recently by the Mikado of Japan. But in Western Asia the sovereign usually seeks to dazzle his subjects with his glory and wealth, and awe them by an exhibition of his power. He takes frequent occasion to display his splendor, and to amuse the people with shows. At such times he sits in state, surrounded by his chief officers, and adorned with all that can impress an Oriental. The governors and great men of his kingdom present themselves in turn, and

* Philostratus, lib. ii. † Bruce, vol. iv., p. 513. ‡ 2 Chron. ix., 17.
§ 1 Sam. xviii., 17. ‖ 1 Kings vii., 8.

offer him valuable gifts. It reminds one of Solomon's court, and of the visit and presents of the Queen of Sheba.* We shall briefly describe such a scene, in the words of eye-witnesses who beheld it before European ideas had begun to affect the ancient customs of the East. On such an occasion the Shah of Persia, as he sat in Oriental fashion upon his elevated throne, could only be seen from the waist upward, being hid by the railing, which bore a variety of vases and toys. Two square pillars supported an imitation of peacocks, studded with precious stones of every description, and holding each a ruby in its bill. On the round top of the throne was a representation of the sun with rays of diamonds. The throne was covered with plates of gold and enamel, and it was said to have cost five hundred thousand dollars.† The king wore a coat of scarlet and gold, and his shoulders were covered with layers of pearls and precious stones. On each arm were three jeweled rings, or armlets, called "bazubend," worn by royalty alone.‡ These contain his finest jewels, one of which, the "diria nory," is one of the largest in the world. Round his waist he wore a band of pearls four inches broad, clasped in front, where shone an emerald of immense size. He carried a brilliant dagger in this belt, with a tassel of pearls, upon which he kept his hand, using it as a plaything. His "kalioon," or water-pipe, blazed with precious stones. On the right of the throne stood four pages, holding respectively his crown, his shield and mace, his bow and arrows, and his sword. The crown, or tiara, was thickly inlaid with pearls, emeralds, rubies, and diamonds; on the summit was a gika of precious stones and a tuft of herons' feathers.§

The foregoing description may be illustrated by the portrait of Mahmood Shah on the following page, copied from a picture published in England some years ago.‖ Many of the details are imperfect, but the general character is correct.

It should, however, be remembered that the Persians have ever been fond of changing fashions in dress, thus sometimes

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* 2 Chron. ix., 1, 23, 24.

† Morier, vol. i., p. 191.

‡ 2 Sam. i., 10. The word in the Latin version is correctly translated *armillæ*. As they were brought to David, to prove that Saul was dead, they could have been worn by the monarch alone, like the modern "bazubend."—Bonomi, p. 436.

§ Morier, vol. i., p. 214; Judg. viii., 26.

‖ Perkins, preface.

widely differing in their garb from other Orientals. In order, therefore, to give our readers a more complete idea of an Eastern sovereign, we have reproduced a picture of Sultan Mahmood II. on page 337, with some of his chief attendants. It was published a few years ago by Arif Pasha, under the auspices of the Turkish Government, and claims to be a faithful drawing of the original. The beautiful collection of miniature portraits of the Osmanli dynasty, kept in the Imperial Library of the Seraglio Point (now burned), represented all the Turkish sovereigns in essentially the same garb, though there was evidently a slight change of fashions, especially in the form of the turban.*



Mahmood Shah, of Persia.

When a new sultan ascends the throne, the act of investiture does not, strictly speaking, consist in a coronation; for he never wears a crown, but simply a regal jewel with heron-feathers upon his head. He goes in state to the Mosk of Eyoob, and the chief of the mevlevy (whirling)

* "From a representation of the portrait of Manuel Palœologus, taken from an ancient manuscript, and preserved in Bandurius ('Imperium Orientale,' vol. ii., p. 991: edit. Paris, 1711), it appears that there is little difference between the costume of a Greek emperor in the fifteenth century and a grand signor of the nineteenth. The mark of distinction worn upon the head of the Turkish sultans and other grandees of the empire, of which the *calathus* was an archetype, is also another remarkable circumstance in the identity of ancient and modern customs." —CLARKE, "Travels," p. 33, note.

dervishes, being sent for to Konieh (the ancient Iconium), girds the sword around his waist, and prays for his prosperity. Then the officers, the army, and the people shout, "Long live our king!"*

The Abyssinians claim to have derived many of their customs from the Hebrews, dating from the visit of their queen to King Solomon.† Their sovereign at his coronation is "anointed with plain oil of olives, which is poured upon his head, while he rubs it into his long hair, indecently enough, with both his hands. The crown is in the shape of a priest's mitre, and has a hood such as they wear when they say mass. It is covered with silver and gold, and lined with fine blue silk. Formerly the king's face was never seen, nor any part of him, except sometimes his foot."‡

One of the emblems of royalty consists of the umbrella, or large parasol, which no one else is allowed to use.§ It is carried by an attendant, who walks behind him, and is usually made of crimson silk.‖ Even at Constantinople, where the large European population obliges the Turkish Government to tolerate many customs which are prohibited in the interior of the country, no umbrella can be opened in front of the sultan's palace, whether in the street or on the Bosphorus, without the risk of a musket-shot from the sentinels. Orientals never use umbrellas; they either wrap their heads and shoulders in a coarse shawl, or wear a woolen "aba," which is waterproof to a considerable degree, and, with its hood of the same material, constitutes the regular traveling costume.

We have the evidence of numerous carvings, both Egyptian and Assyrian, that in ancient times also the king alone enjoyed the privilege of using an umbrella.¶ The custom appears so arbitrary that the coincidence is all the more remarkable, and establishes a historical connection.

There is nothing in the East like the simple manners of Occidental rulers. The only persons ever allowed to sit in the king's presence are his nearest relations, when older than himself, learned or holy men, and ambassadors, not upon state occasions alone, but at any time, except in moments of relaxa-

* 1 Kings i., 38–40.
† 1 Kings x., 1, 2.
‡ Bruce, vol. iii., p. 594.
§ Morier, vol. ii., p. 93.
‖ Morier, "Haji Baba," vol. ii., pp. 93. 222.
¶ Layard, vol. ii., p. 253.

tion.* Certain formalities must be observed in an audience with the sovereign, which vary according to one's rank. The spot where his shoes must be left, and that whereon he must stand, are decided by the strict rules of etiquette. The usual mode of rendering homage consists in bending the body forward at a right angle, the hands resting meanwhile upon the knees, as indicated in the annexed engraving. This mode of salutation is referred to in 1 Sam. xxiv., 8, where it is stated that Saul, after leaving the cave, heard David's voice calling after him, and, turning round, saw him "stoop with his face to the earth, and bow himself."† But there is another manner of bowing before royalty which is peculiar to the East; it consists in a prostration upon the earth, similar to the humblest act of "worship" offered to the Deity.‡ In ancient times the ceremonial of the Persian court enjoined this "adoration" upon all who approached the "great king" as strictly as was until recently required in Japan.§ History tells of the Athenian ambassadors to Artaxerxes, who were required to prostrate themselves before the king: one of them, Armenias by name, compromised the matter by dropping his ring, and stooping to take it up; while another, Timagoras, complied with the requirement, and, on his return to Athens, was put to death for dishonoring his country.‖ The accompanying illustration, taken from an Assyrian slab, shows the manner in which this prostration was anciently, and is still, performed. It is now called the "rooy zemin" in Persia, and its continued existence, in spite of the leveling principles of Islam, is evidence that Oriental ideas of royalty have not essentially changed



Bowing to the King. (1 Sam. xxiv., 8.)

* Tavernier, bk. iv., chap. xvii.

† 1 Sam. xxviii., 14; 2 Sam. ix., 8; 1 Kings ii., 19., etc.

‡ Josh. v., 14; Morier, vol. ii., p. 172.

§ Prideaux, vol. ii., pp. 30, 31. ‖ Ibid., vol. ii., p. 267.

during the last three thousand years. It is practiced even in nominally Christian Abyssinia, where Bruce describes it as follows: "It is observed as often as one enters into the sov-



Adoring the Assyrian King: the State Umbrella. (Gen. xlii., 6.)

ereign's presence. It does not consist in simple kneeling, but in absolute prostration. You first fall upon your knees, then upon the palms of your hands, and incline your head and body till your forehead touches the earth. If you expect an answer, you lie in that posture until the king himself, or some one for him, desires you to rise."* It is a peculiar feature of Oriental ceremonial that an inferior is always required to cover his hands before a superior. So Xenophon informs us that Cyrus ordered two persons to be put to death who failed to obey this rule.†

This prostration before kings, venerated men, or such as are in authority, is repeatedly referred to in the Scriptures.‡ The prophets and servants of the Most High censured the act as idolatrous; but our Lord, by accepting it, acknowledged his own Divine character.§ It is quite common at the present day for a criminal to prostrate himself before the judge or governor, a slave or menial before his master, begging for mercy, kissing his feet, and wetting them with his tears. Many simply kiss the hem of the garment.‖



Egyptian Prostration. (Matt. xviii., 26.)

* Bruce, vol. iii., p. 600. † Churchill, "Mount Lebanon," vol. i., p. 333.
‡ Gen. xxxvii., 10; xlii., 6; Dan. ii., 46; Acts x., 25, 26.
§ Matt. xv., 25; xxviii., 9, etc. ‖ Esth. viii., 3; Matt. xviii., 29; Luke vii., 38.

Let us now pass from the personal appearance of the sovereign to the life he leads, and the condition of his family. We shall afterward notice the authority and power he exercises, and his relations to his people.

The palace of the sultan, or shah, is divided into two distinct parts, having no public communication one with the other. The first and finer portion stands in full view of the public, and contains the hall of audience already described, with other apartments for the use of the prince, his male attendants, and his ministers. Here he transacts all public business. The council of state usually meets in one of the halls, and is presided over by the grand vizier, or prime minister, an officer met with in all Oriental states from the earliest times to the present. His appointment is often sudden, and the result of a whim, and his fall as unexpected. His power is unlimited, like that of his master: him alone he is bound to obey.

In the enumeration of the chief officers of the court of King Solomon, which served as a model to his successors, the grand vizier is called the "chief officer," and the "king's friend" (1 Kings iv., 5, margin), while the rest of the council consisted, as now, of the following officers: the chief scribe, "Reïs Effendy," or minister of foreign affairs (ver. 3); the Scribes, or secretaries of the other departments (ver. 3); "over the host," *i. e.*, the "Seraskier" (ver. 4); and, in the Turkish empire, the grand admiral, or "Capitan Pasha;" the priest (ver. 2), high-priest, or "Sheikh-ool-Islam;" and the one over the tribute (ver. 6), "Haznedar," or treasurer, to whom Muslims add the "Grand Mufti," or head of the law; and the "officer of the household," or chief eunuch. The sultan generally attends the sessions in person, but keeps out of sight, occupying a small room, from whose latticed window he sees and hears all that is going on, without being himself seen. This has long been the practice of Eastern sovereigns at Bagdad, in Egypt, and in Granada, and it continues to be the custom at Constantinople and in Abyssinia. It has, doubtless, tended to mitigate the abuse of power in which subordinates are so apt to indulge.*

Connected with the first portion of the palace, to which we have thus far confined our attention, are the stables which con-

* Bruce, vol. iii., p. 596.

tain the king's private horses. All the sovereigns of the East pride themselves on being good horsemen, and some of them have not hesitated to enter the lists with their subjects in the dangerous game of the jerid. Others have been fond of the chase, chiefly hawking, or pursuing the hare, the gazelle, or the wild ass with hounds. The hunting establishment of the sultans was until recently very extensive and costly. The chief falconer employed one thousand men in the service; he was lodged and fed at the Seraglio, and had a salary of fifteen thousand dollars. Many of the royal hawks wore valuable jewels.* The later sultans, however, have had little taste for sport. In the capital of Persia there is a great square, in the centre of which stands a high post, somewhat similar to a May-pole, upon whose summit a pigeon is sometimes tied, and shot at with arrows by horsemen running at full speed. The shahs used to join in this exercise, a golden cup being substituted for the pigeon. They would start at full speed across the square, pass the pole, and, turning round in the saddle, shoot the arrow at the cup. Shah Sefi has been known to hit the cup three times out of five.† The sultans also practice shooting the arrow; but their object is distance, not precision. There are several open spaces in the neighborhood of Constantinople, denominated "ok meïdan," or fields of royal archery, where and at various distances stand solitary marble pillars with inscriptions indicating the name of the sultan whose arrow reached the spot.

The palaces of ancient Assyria are adorned with finely sculptured representations of royal hunts.‡ The Pharaohs also indulged in the pleasures of the chase, as the Egyptian remains testify.§ The Scriptures are silent on this subject; but the omission of this royal pastime would leave incomplete our conception of the life and occupations of the Hebrew kings.

We now come to the royal harim, or women's apartments—a distinct palace, communicating with the first by means of a gallery and small door. The harim (literal, *forbidden*) is extensive, and contains many sumptuous apartments, highly decorated and richly furnished, with kitchens attached, rooms for

* Tavernier, "Seraglio," p. 70.
† Ibid., p. 151.
‡ Bonomi, pp. 390–400, etc.
§ Wilkinson, vol. i., p. 221.

menials, etc. There are often separate structures, kiosks, and pleasure-houses, and the gardens are frequently extensive, and adorned with marble tanks and jetting fountains. Such must have been the palace built by Solomon for the daughter of Pharaoh outside of Jerusalem,* if we may judge from the great reservoirs, or tanks, yet visible; and still more wonderful were the "hanging gardens" of Babylon, built by Nebuchadnezzar for his queen.†

In the harim dwell the king's wives, limited to eight by the Koran, though common Muslims can have but four.‡ But there are hundreds of other women, purchased by the sovereign, obtained in war, or presented him as gifts. The organization of the royal harim is the counterpart of the royal court, every officer among the men being represented by a similar officer among the women, even to the police. Besides the wives, there are many concubines—*odalisks*, or *bazigers*—handsome girls trained to sing, dance, and perform gymnastic feats. The only men besides the master himself who have access to the interior of the harim are the white and the black eunuchs, who occupy apartments contiguous. This class of human beings has existed from time immemorial in the lands of the Bible, and appears to have been mostly confined to that portion of the world. They are despised by all; yet they exercise great influence over their master, enjoying free access to him, and being continually about his person. Their power is unlimited in the harim, and they know how to make use of it to their advantage. It is thus that many of the chief offices of state in the East have ever been filled by this class of men. Potiphar, the "captain of Pharaoh's guard," was a eunuch.§ The beardless attendants upon the kings of Assyria, and some of their generals, who fought in splendid chariots, were also eunuchs.‖ The same was the case in Babylon,¶ in the palace of the kings of Persia at Shushan,** as well as in the Lower, or Byzantine, empire, from the fourth century down. They are now restricted among Muslims (who alone tolerate them) to certain offices and duties of a subordinate character, yet are often involved in the court intrigues and political changes

* 2 Chron. viii., 11. † Rawlinson, "Herodotus," vol. i., p. 420, note.
‡ Cant. vi., 8. § Gen. xxxvii., 36, margin; Tavernier, "Seraglio," p. 9.
‖ Bonomi, p. 265, fig. 121. ¶ Dan. i., 7. ** Esth. i., 12.

which take place at Constantinople.* Eunuchs were probably as well known to the ancient Hebrews as they are to modern Orientals. They were employed in the palaces of the kings of Judah and Israel, as now at Constantinople and Teheran, and were probably kept by wealthy citizens in Jerusalem and Samaria, to the same extent as in our day by rich Turks, Persians, and Arabs.† Yet the Mosaic legislation sought to put an end to the evil among the Jews, by placing eunuchs under the greatest religious disabilities,‡ a fact which alone sufficiently indicates the prevalence of the practice at the time of the Exodus. Yet the institution still existed in New Testament times, and has come down to our own.§ We even find it in the primitive Church in the case of Origen (A.D. 200).‖ The practice is certainly most barbarous, and involves the death of a majority of those who are subjected to it; and it creates a class of men who are notoriously actuated by low and sordid passions, incapable of family ties, and moved only by unmitigated selfishness. Yet the very existence of polygamy appears to involve the continuance of this unnatural practice—another illustration of the truth that one wrong necessitates another. Eunuchs, though now confined to the Muslims, are yet very numerous. Tavernier, when at Golconda about two hundred years ago, ascertained that in that very year twenty-two thousand eunuchs had been exported from that kingdom alone.¶ The states of Assam, Bootan, Aracan, and Pegu, now incorporated in British India, have also long been engaged in this traffic. Black eunuchs, however, are imported from Africa; they are fewer, and dearer: the ugliest always fetch the highest price.

The Scriptures contain few allusions to the harims of the Hebrew kings, but these suffice to show that they were managed essentially as at present. The circumstances which led King David to fall into grievous sin "about the matter of

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* Tavernier, "Seraglio," p. 6.

† 1 Sam. viii., 15; 1 Kings xxii., 9; 2 Kings ix., 32; xxiv., 12, 15; 1 Chron. xxviii., 1.

‡ Deut. xxiii., 1. § Matt. xix., 12; Acts viii., 27.

‖ The ancient Persians used to castrate the young men and boys of their vanquished enemies.—GILLIES, "Ancient Greece," vol. i., chap. viii., p. 377.

¶ Tavernier, "Seraglio," p. 6.

Uriah" appear natural to one who is familiar with the East. He probably slept on the roof of his house—as is done in all that region during the summer heats—for "the time had expired when kings go forth to battle, and David tarried still at Jerusalem."* He, of course, slept in the harim, occupied by his women alone; indeed, the language seems to imply that the king was supposed to have gone "with the army and with Joab." The provision for screening adjoining harims and gardens from each other is always insignificant, compared with what is done to hide them from the gaze of men. Bathsheba was probably innocent of any evil intention, especially as she bathed in the night, by moonlight, probably in the garden tank, as Oriental women are fond of doing. And so the king gazed upon his neighbor's wife, coveted her, and the end was adultery and murder.

The book of Esther contains a pretty full account of the polygamy practiced by the Persian kings. Ahasuerus the king (probably the Xerxes of the Greeks and of Salamis) put away Vashti, his queen, in a drunken fit, on account of her modesty and tenacious adherence to the customs of the East respecting the conduct of women. Under the pretext of choosing another queen, he ordered that his harim should be replenished with the fairest virgins of his empire, which "extended from India to Ethiopia, and contained a hundred and seven-and-twenty provinces."† The virgins were consigned to the king's chamberlain, or keeper of the women (chap. ii., ver. 3), doubtless a eunuch, and were placed in a palace, where they went through a preliminary preparation lasting a whole year (ver. 12), just as is now done with the Circassian slaves intended for the sultan's seraglio or the shah's harim.‡ They were then, each in turn, admitted to the king, and afterward removed to another palace, corresponding to a similar building at Constantinople, where the women of the deceased sultan are kept. "They came in no more unto the king, except the king delighted in them, and they were called by name."§

The nations represented in Xerxes's seraglio were not more numerous than in those of Oriental monarchs of the present

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* 2 Sam. xi., 1.

† Esth. i., 1.

‡ Morier, "Haji Baba," vol. ii., chap. iv.

§ Esth. ii., 14.

day. The empire of the sultan is hardly less extensive, nor are his purveyors limited to its boundaries. The shah, too, imports women from Turkey, Africa, and the tribes of the East. Thus Solomon "loved many strange women, besides the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites."* The Bible, which never palliates the faults of its heroes, informs us that Solomon had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, a considerable increase since his father David's death, who kept seven wives and ten concubines.† It is not possible to ascertain the number of inmates in the royal harims at Constantinople and Teheran; but these doubtless correspond to Solomon's rather than David's house.‡ In every case the fair occupants of these gilded cages are watched with the most jealous care. They are well fed and sumptuously clothed, but mostly confined to the premises under the wakeful eye of the merciless eunuchs. Formerly a sultana never went out of the harim except under a canopy, whose heavy curtains hid all but the head of the horse upon which she rode. The slightest attempt on the part of any unauthorized person to enter even the portion of the seraglio appropriated to the men was punished with death.§ The old palaces on Seraglio Point could tell many a bloody tale, and the waters that rush by have borne away many a strangled corpse: no wonder the spot has been deserted by the last and more humane sultans of the race of Osman. At Teheran, the inmates of the shah's harim are capitally punished by being thrown, in the night, from the summit of a lofty tower, and the mangled body is buried in an adjoining cemetery.‖

Sometimes one particular wife of the king is his queen. It was so with Queen Vashti, and with Esther after her.¶ The same was the case with some of the Chaldean kings, as appears from the history of Semiramis and Nitocris.** Solomon's

* 1 Kings xi., 1. † 2 Sam. iii., 2–5; xx., 3.

‡ Some interesting details respecting the internal arrangements of the shah's harim may be learned by the curious reader from Morier's "First Journey," pp. 225, 226; and "Second Journey," p. 174; and respecting the old seraglio, at Constantinople, in Tavernier, "Seraglio;" and Thevenot, part i., chap. xviii., pp. 23–25.

§ Tavernier, "Seraglio," p. 86. ‖ "Haji Baba," vol. ii., chap. xvii.

¶ Esth. i., 19; ii., 17.

** Rawlinson, "Herodotus," vol. i., pp. 382, 427.

queen was the daughter of Pharaoh;* and in modern times another Solomon, the sultan Suleïman the Magnificent, was faithful to the celebrated Roxelana. These cases, however, are exceptional. The king has his favorites, who make the most of their brief period of power; but the mothers of his sons enjoy his permanent affection. It is the queen-mother who occupies a position equal, or even superior, to that of *our* queen-consorts.† She has a palace of her own, and holds a court. Her son stands in her presence after the manner of the East, sitting down only at her request.‡ She is free to go where she likes, and often appears in great state. She exerts a powerful and sometimes a controlling influence over public affairs. Once a year only, at the great festival called "the Night of Power," she joins with the principal officers and ministers in kissing the hem of her son's garment, presenting him at the same time with a young and beautiful slave. The seat at his right hand, given by Solomon to his mother, is still the seat of honor with the Muslims.§

On one point the practice of the ancients differs from that of the moderns. When Solomon's half-brother, Adonijah, desired to marry his father's widow, Abishag, it was deemed equivalent to an attempt to seize the kingdom, and was punished with death as an act of treason.‖ The same principle repeatedly occurs in the ancient history of the East. Now, however, the king himself not unfrequently gives one of his women to a subject whom he desires to honor; his widows are also sometimes given in marriage. We have repeatedly known this to occur in Turkey, and a similar practice exists in Persia.¶

Little or no change appears to have taken place in the sources of the king's revenue, or the manner of collecting it. He is a large land proprietor, owns numerous flocks and herds, and manages them like any private citizen. This was the case with King David; he owned villages, and had private "store-houses" all over the country. He possessed so many farms (*chifliks*) that he appointed a minister to superintend the "work of the field for the tillage of the ground." He had many "vineyards, olive-trees, and sycamore-trees," and herds of "camels and ass-

* 1 Kings iii., 1. † Stanley, "Jewish Church," vol. ii., chap. xxxv., p. 432.
‡ 1 Kings ii., 19; 2 Kings xxiv., 15. § Lane, vol. i., p. 259.
‖ 1 Kings ii., 13–25. ¶ "Haji Baba," vol. i., chap. xxiv.

es," as well as "flocks" of sheep and goats.* His successors enjoyed the same sources of revenue. But, not content with these, Solomon entered into commercial ventures, which proved highly successful. He had a sea-port on the Red Sea, and traded with India and Africa, making Jerusalem the great mart for the products of the far East, as was Tyre, the city of his friend King Hiram, for those of the West. Thus the two cities became the richest in the world, "silver and gold being as plenteous as stones, and cedar-trees as the sycamore-trees that are in the (Jordan) vale for abundance."† The course of the present rulers of Bible lands is precisely similar. Pharaoh, under the grand viziership of Joseph, purchased all the land of Egypt, except the estates of the numerous priestly caste; and the present khedive of the same country owns one-fifth of its soil; he compels the poor fellahs to cultivate it at the lowest possible wages, and monopolizes the entire exports.

The ancient system of taxation is not perfectly understood, having been modified by the Romans. We shall describe the present mode, as it may throw some light upon the old.

The taxes are of two kinds, being either directly levied upon every household, or indirectly upon the produce of the soil, whether as raw material or manufactured. The former, called *salian*, is of the nature of an income tax. In collecting the latter, the usual practice is to estimate the value of the crop as it stands in the field, or on the trees. Should the owner refuse to accept this valuation, he must let the grain remain unwinnowed on the threshing-floor and the fruit ungathered, until the tax collector deigns to come to witness the operation, and measure out his tenth. Some articles of produce, however, are taxed as they are brought into the town. A booth of branches, or a more substantial hut, is erected at every entrance into the city, or village, and there, both day and night, sits a man "at the receipt of custom."‡ He taxes all the produce, piercing with a long, sharp iron rod the large camel bags of wheat or cotton, in order to discover concealed copper-ware or other contraband. Moreover, certain institutions and individuals enjoy the privilege of collecting a special tax upon specific articles. Every additional process in the manufacture of raw material

* 1 Chron. xxvii., 25–31. † 2 Chron. i., 15. ‡ Matt. ix., 9.

subjects it to a new tax; and thus it happens that no less than thirty-three per cent. of the value of some articles is levied upon them before they reach the consumer's hands.

It would seem that former generations fared no better than the present. Even the wise and wealthy Solomon "made the yoke of the Hebrews so grievous" that ten out of the twelve tribes broke away from his successor for refusing to lighten their burdens.*

There is another circumstance which serves greatly to aggravate this oppression. The tax-gatherers are not the direct agents of the government, collecting on its account, and merely receiving wages. The collection of the revenue is sold to the highest bidder, and he seeks to make his venture as profitable as possible. The same system was adopted by the Romans in all the Eastern countries subject to their power in New Testament times, and with the same results; for the Jews came to regard the tax-gatherer, even when their own countryman, as among the most wicked of men, classing him with "harlots and sinners."† Some of them, however, were strictly honest men, and there are a few such even now.‡

Mention was made above of the *salian*, or direct tax, laid upon the households. This is distributed in the following manner: The general government determines the amount of money that shall be raised in this manner throughout the country, and apportions it to the several provinces, or *pashaliks*, according to the ability of each based upon past experience. The provincial councils divide the sum thus required among the towns and villages, and the local councils make a further distribution among the different sects of each place. The head of each religious sect is personally responsible to the authorities of the place for the amount required of his people. He is to assess every household, and may call upon the Turkish police to enforce his demands. This explains the fact that no census of the population is ever taken. The taxes being laid not upon individuals but upon households, the authorities need to know only the number of "houses" belonging to every sect. Every unmarried man counts for a household. This class generally live away from home, doing busi-

* 1 Kings xii., 4. † Matt. ix., 11; xxi., 32. ‡ Luke xix., 8.

ness abroad, in which case they pay their taxes at home; for they are not allowed to leave their native city until they have given security that their *salian* shall be paid in their absence. Up to a few years ago a "capitation" tax was paid by every male of whatever age not a Muslim; the sum was not large, but could be demanded at any moment, so that every one had to carry his certificate of payment constantly upon his person. This would seem to resemble the *didrachme* tax demanded of our Lord, and amounting to two shillings, or fifty cents.* It seems, however, that payment was optional, and the tax, though small, was much opposed by the Jews. It eventually led to the revolt of the nation against the Romans, and thus to the destruction of Jerusalem.

Some have thought that the present mode of taxing the different subject-sects separately through their chiefs is of modern origin, being introduced by the Turks, or at most by Mohammed. There is, however, reason to believe that this is not the case. As early as the Babylonish captivity and since that period, whenever the Jews were subject to other nations, they have had a chief magistrate of their own, corresponding to the present *haham bashy* at Constantinople, who exercised not only a spiritual authority over them, but also governed them in civil matters, purchasing his commission from the king. In Babylon, he was called *rosh golah*, or head of the captivity; in Alexandria, *alabarkha;* and at Antioch, *ethnarkha.* Imperial laws and edicts respecting this office are still extant.† The Muslims appear to have simply applied the same system to the Christian sects, by recognizing as their heads their respective patriarchs at Constantinople, Jerusalem, and Cairo, who become responsible for the taxes due from their people, while the bishops and priests have a similar authority in the towns and villages; these last correspond to the New Testament "chief rulers of the synagogues" (Acts xviii., 17), who are the modern hahams. This system is evidently agreeable to all parties concerned. The Turks get their money without the trouble and expense of collecting it. The patriarchs and *chorbajies* (head men) who assist them indemnify themselves for giving their security by paying no taxes, or by exercising

* Matt. xvii., 24.

† Prideaux, vol. iii., p. 311.

a lucrative authority over their co-religionists; and the tax-payers prefer to deal with one of their own people rather than with the merciless Turk.

It would, however, be a great mistake to suppose that the revenue of the sovereign, or the income of the chief officers of government, is confined to regular and legitimate taxation. It has been the misfortune of Western Asia to possess almost boundless resources, which have for ages made her the prey of freebooters, both foreign and indigenous, who have drained her of her wealth, and exhausted her productive powers, until in many parts the land is well-nigh turned to a wilderness.* The officers of government of every grade make it their chief study to rob the people of all the money they can during their usually short stay in a particular office; a practice greatly encouraged by the large presents required of a candidate before he can be appointed, or installed. The case of the pashalik of Egypt, before its *quasi* independence, may serve as an example: the pasha who received the appointment was expected to pay handsomely for the favor. The regular fee to the sultan was six hundred thousand dollars; but there were many other recipients, so that the entire cost was estimated at about two millions of dollars, all of which must of course be wrung out of the people of Egypt, in addition to the regular taxes. And let it be remembered that the pashas are often changed for the sake of the recurring present, sometimes remaining but a fortnight in power; and not long ago, forfeiting their heads as well as their office.

* There is no doubt that the population of the Bible lands in Asia has diminished beyond calculation during the last one thousand years. In many fertile and once populous districts not a human being is left, and the ground lies fallow. The site of cities but recently great and prosperous, like Nisibis and Koofa, can scarcely be recognized (Fletcher, p. 207). A few new towns have, indeed, come into existence, like Yozghat and Cassaba, and the names of Yenikeuy and Yenishehir (Newburgh and Newtown) reveal the fact that a place, now perhaps in ruins, was built since the establishment of the Turkish power. Some places, too, have grown considerably, owing to foreign commerce and colonization, such as Beirut, Alexandria, Smyrna, Trebizond, and Constantinople. But these are exceptions; the native population is diminishing, especially the Muslims, despite the late large immigration of Circassians and Nogay Tartars. The regions most affected by decay are those which lie within the reach of the desert Bedawin, whose annual forays have changed into a howling wilderness some of the most populous districts of the earth, if we may judge by the interesting ruins of cities thickly scattered over the surface of the ground.

It is an interesting fact that the system practiced by the modern sovereigns of the East is the same in principle as that adopted by Solomon and the Hebrew kings,* and by their neighbors, the sovereigns of Assyria, Babylonia, and Persia, as well as at a later period by the Parthian monarchs, and the caliphs and Saracen sultans. The governors of provinces, after receiving their appointment, are allowed to do pretty much as they like, provided they send in the usual taxes and *presents;* for, besides the original fee, every transaction with the government, even to payment of the fixed *salian,* must be accompanied by a *douceur.* And on special occasions, such as the great festivals, the chief officers of state bring or send presents, in order to prevent the stepping in of some rival aspirant to royal favor. We have a curious account of such a scene, given by an eye-witness. The place is the capital of Persia, and the time the grand festival of the *Norood,* or New-year, which occurs at the spring equinox, and has been handed down from the earliest antiquity.† The king is seated in a sort of balcony overlooking the great square, which is crowded with officers, soldiers, and people in gala dress. The master of ceremonies advances with a clerk who, in a loud voice, announces the present of Prince Hosein, governor of Shiraz. It consists of a very long train of men, bearing trays upon their heads, which contain shawls, silk stuffs, pearls, etc., after which come vast quantities of sugar-plums, and then mules laden with fruit. The present of the Prince of Hamadan, next announced by the herald, consists of pistols and spears, together with one hundred camels and as many mules. The Prince of Yezd presents shawls and silken stuffs, manufactured in his province. Last of all comes the offering of the grand vizier, consisting of "fifty mules, each covered with a fine cashmere shawl, and carrying a load of one thousand *tomans,*" or five thousand dollars, in gold.‡

* 1 Kings iv., 21. Compare ver. 24; and for the complete organization of the empire, chap. x., where it appears that the kings "brought every man his present a rate year by year" (ver. 25), and the amount of annual revenue from all sources was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold (ver. 14). See also 2 Chron. ix., 13–28, and Psa. lxxii., 8–11. The duties as understood in the earliest times toward the head of the empire may be summed up in the two words, "homage" and "tribute."—RAWLINSON, "Herodotus," vol. i., p. 402, note, p. 403.

† Exod. xii., 2.

‡ Morier, "First Journey," pp. 207, 208.

When all these sources of revenue fail to supply their wants, some princes have been known to resort to the expedient of sending a present of a head of game of their own shooting, or some other trifle, to a wealthy subject, who is expected to pay a round sum for the honor. The property of all delinquents also goes to replenish the royal coffers.*

An Oriental sovereign doubtless needs to fleece his sheep, or flock—the precise meaning of the term *rayah*, by which his people are called. His expenses are great; he entertains a large body of retainers, holds an expensive court, and has a numerous family of wives, concubines, and children. When, at his death, his treasure-vaults are examined by his successor, he usually finds them empty. Few sultans have, like Amurat (Moorad), left to their heirs one hundred and fifty millions in gold. Thus Solomon left much treasure to his son, but his example was followed by few after him.

In lands where hospitality is deemed a cardinal virtue, royalty can not fail to give many instances of it. King David entertained "Mephibosheth at his table continually,"† the only remaining heir of the fallen house of Saul. The King of Babylon "lifted up the head of Jehoiachim, king of Judah; he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life; and his allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life."‡ These are instances of royal hospitality, even toward a foe, on account of his former rank. We once knew the independent khan of the Lesghies, whose territory was conquered by the Russians; he fled into Turkey with eighty families of his followers, and to the day of his death lived at the expense of the sultan, who paid him and his people "a continual allowance." We find an instance of still larger hospitality in the course pursued by the sultan toward the hundreds of thousands of Circassian families whom the Russian Government had exiled from their homes: they were settled on the crown-lands, given them in freehold, and were fed for several years at the sultan's expense. Bruce gives an instance of similar hospitality, taken from the "Annals of Abyssinia," and adds: "The custom is al-

* Tavernier, "Seraglio," p. 59.

† 2 Sam. ix., 7.

‡ 2 Kings xxv., 27, 29, 30.

ways observed in the East by the princes toward their unfortunate neighbors."*

The king supports many attendants, who help to display his grandeur and majesty, or perform the duties of government. Some of these deserve our particular attention, on account of their resemblance to similar officers mentioned in the Scriptures. We have already spoken of the eunuchs, both white and black. One of Pharaoh's eunuchs was Potiphar, who is styled "chief of the slaughter-men," as the Hebrew text has it.† This officer corresponds to the *feraz bashy* of the Persians, and the *jellat bashy* of the Turks, who have charge of the punishment of criminals, by decapitation, strangulation, the bastinado, or otherwise, and necessarily control the royal prison.‡ The royal "runners," messengers, heralds, and mail-carriers are also an old institution, adopted from the Eastern kings by those of the Hebrews.§ They are repeatedly referred to in the Scriptures.‖ The king's messenger wears a peculiar uniform or garb, that no one may venture to hinder or detain him. His orders or dispatches are carried on his breast in a handsomely embroidered case, similar to a port-folio. The runners (*shatirs*) who clear the way before their master as he rides, walking two and two, and the chief by his stirrup,¶ and those who carry letters to a distance, make this business their hereditary occupation, being trained to it from childhood. They begin at seven years of age by taking long walks at a slow pace; the following year they increase their speed; and the third they run three miles at a time. At eighteen they travel considerable distances, and carry their provisions; for they always make short cuts, and can not depend on finding food or water on the way. None are received into the king's service without first passing through a certain ordeal, which consists in running, on an appointed day, in the presence of many witnesses, a distance equivalent to one hundred and eight miles, between sunrise and sunset. Some have done it in twelve hours.** Their badge of office is a little bell, fastened to their leathern belt. The higher class of royal messengers in Turkey are called *chaoosh*.

It is a universal custom in the East to give a present to the

* Vol. ii., p. 486. † Gen. xxxvii., 36. ‡ Gen. xxxix., 20.
§ 1 Sam. xxii., 17. ‖ 1 Sam. xix., 11; 2 Sam. iii., 14; Isa. xviii., 2, etc.
¶ Gen. xli., 43. ** Tavernier, bk. iv., chap. v.

bearer of good tidings, and such a person is wont to announce his approach by calling with a loud voice, "*Mujdeh! Mujdeh!*" (a present). When the news is important, several seek to outrun each other and obtain the reward, as after Absalom's defeat and death.*

The language of Cushi (ver. 32) contains the very words still used on similar occasions: "The enemies of my lord be as that young man!" And it was doubtless the hope of a handsome present that led the young Amalekite to carry to David the news of Saul's death from the bloody field of Gilboa.†

The rewards bestowed by the sovereign on such occasions, or for any services whatever, are regulated by no rule or limit, but his own fancy. His will is the only law; yet he is himself to a great degree under the control of the usages and customs of the land, which create public opinion, and which, even in the East, can not be trampled upon with impunity. The appointments to office are arbitrary in the extreme, and it may truly be said that offices are sought for people to occupy, and not suitable persons to perform the duties of said offices. There is no hierarchy either in the civil or military service, no gradual advancement, as with us, based upon honorable services or seniority. Promotion is the result of favor or bribery. We have known a man who was captain in the army one day, and was appointed quarantine doctor the next. The history of Eastern despots is replete with examples of sudden advancement from the very lowest to the highest position in the state. Often has a sultan, taking a fancy to one of his own menials, made him his grand vizier. Thus in a single hour a Hebrew slave was placed over the whole land of Egypt, and became a ruler of great eminence and celebrity.‡ That remarkable man, Daniel, owed his promotion "over the province of Babylon" not to his great talents, but to the interpretation of a dream whose correctness time had not yet determined.§ Equally sudden and great is the downfall of those in power. Many a time has the bowstring been presented to a pasha, who up to that moment enjoyed the plenitude of his master's favor.‖ So Haman feasted with Artaxerxes and his

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* 2 Sam. xviii., 24–32. † 2 Sam. i., 1–10. ‡ Gen. xli., 41.
§ Dan. ii., 47, 48. ‖ Thevenot, p. 64.

queen, and before "the banquet of wine" was over he was hurried to execution, and forthwith "hanged upon a gallows."*

Other rewards besides promotions are also bestowed by the king upon those whom he desires to honor; and the most common is the robe of honor, called a kuftan by the Arabs and Turks, and a kala'at by the Persians.† The simplest form of this robe is "a loose garment like a night-gown;"‡ but it usually consists of a coat or robe (kuftan, see page 511), a shawl for a girdle, and another shawl for a turban: in addition, a dagger or sword is sometimes given. In special cases a rich fur is added,§ and we have known the king to give also one of his own horses.‖ But it is when the sovereign desires to bestow a special mark of his regard that he gives away one of his own garments or pelisses.¶ It is in this sense we must understand the statement in 1 Sam. xviii., 4, that "Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments" (*i. e.*, his jibbeh, or benish, and his kuftan), "even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle." So in the book of Esther (vi., 7, 8): "For the man whom the king delighteth to honor, let the royal apparel be brought, which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon." The addition of "the king's crown" was Haman's own conceit. In the case of Joseph** a necklace of gold was put upon his neck, as a token of the office with which he was invested. The Egyptian sculptures are filled with the evidence that the people of that country were very fond of necklaces,†† which in Western Asia are confined to the women. The last mentioned instance is a reference to a simple investiture of office, which, in the East, consists in putting on a kuftan, or pelisse, sent by the sovereign with the firman, or letters patent, which confer the appointment.‡‡

There is reason to believe that the Hebrew kings conformed to the usage of other Eastern sovereigns of their time, by keeping a body-guard about their persons, in time both of peace and war. They performed the police of the capital, and exe-

* Esth. vii.
‡ Bruce, vol. v., p. 407, note.
‖ Xenophon, "Anabasis," lib. i., chap. ii.
¶ Morier, "Second Journey," p. 299.
†† Wilkinson, vol. i., p. 78, fig. 90.
† Perkins, p. 282; Tavernier, p. 180.
§ Morier, "Second Journey," p. 93.
** Gen. xli., 42.
‡‡ Morier, "First Journey," p. 26.

cuted the royal commands throughout the state, in conjunction with the "slaughter-men"—cavasses, ferazes, or janissaries, as they are or have been called in modern times. This body-guard was composed of the most valiant and best soldiers of the kingdom, and kept close to the prince's person during a campaign, especially in a battle. At the beginning of the Hebrew kingdom this institution seems to have been deemed inseparable from royalty; for one of Saul's first acts, after the dismissal of the army, was to engage three thousand men as his attendants and body-guard, two thousand of whom remained with him, and one thousand with his son Jonathan.* David had six hundred men constantly with him while Saul was yet alive, for he had been anointed his successor to the throne.† Solomon made "two hundred targets of beaten gold" and "three hundred shields of gold," which he placed in his own palace, "the house of the forest of Lebanon," doubtless for the use of his own body-guard.‡ These were carried away by Shishak, king of Egypt, during the reign of Rehoboam, who replaced them with shields of brass, clearly indicating that they were not made for simple ornament, but for use.§

The practice of the Turkish and Persian monarchs in this matter is essentially the same, and an allusion to it will serve to illustrate the Hebrew system. The twelve thousand men who form the shah's body-guard are drawn from the province of Mezanderan, and mostly from the Turkish tribe to which he belongs. Their families live in the capital or its vicinity. They are divided into four bodies of three thousand each, who are on duty in turn at the palace, which is called the ark.‖ They are on guard in and about the building and upon its towers; and the service is deemed so honorable, and confers withal so many privileges, that the king's own sons do not disdain to enlist among its officers. The watch-word of these soldiers is *hazir* (ready), which they constantly repeat to each other. There are, besides, three thousand *goolams* (slaves), who live in the palace, and attend the person of the shah wherever he goes.¶ At Constantinople the last named class are called *ishoghlan*. They are promising boys, stolen or forcibly taken

* 1 Sam. xiii., 1, 2; xiv., 52.
† 1 Sam. xxx., 9.
‡ 1 Kings x., 16, 17.
§ 1 Kings xiv., 27.
‖ 1 Chron. xxvii., 1.
¶ Morier, "First Journey," p. 242.

from their Christian parents, and brought up as Muslims. They are kept in the seraglio, under strict discipline, receive a good education, and then have appointments in the civil or the military service.* But the *bostanjies*, also Christians by birth, are the sultan's personal guard, surrounding him and screening him with the plumes of their helmets; they also row his magnificent barge whenever he goes upon the water. The name of body-guard may, however, more properly be applied to a corps of twelve thousand janissaries, who were stationed at the capital in time of peace, and who kept close to the sovereign in war. They were, by law, the children of Christians killed in battle, and numbered fifty thousand men in all, the remainder being in garrison in different parts of the empire. The pay was small, but so many privileges were enjoyed by the men that vast numbers obtained a place among them by bribery who had no right to be there. This disorderly militia brought the country into a state of anarchy, deposing the sultans at will, and plundering the people, till it was finally abolished and suppressed by Sultan Mahmood in 1827, the European military system being adopted in its stead †

But it may be asked, how, according to the old or Oriental system, was a large army collected in Turkey in time of war? In ordinary cases, the troops called out, besides the janissaries, were the *spahis* and *zaïms*, who, on account of their past services, lived on certain crown-lands, enjoying their revenues during life, or good behavior, on condition of their joining the sultan in case of war with a certain number of followers, both foot and horse. But in case of a religious war, or one sanctioned by a *fetva* (opinion) of the Sheikh-ool-Islam, an appeal is made to all the faithful in the mosks. The men thus collected know nothing of war, and are little better than an armed rabble; but they are hardy, and acquainted from their childhood with the use of weapons and the management of horses.‡

It is evident, from the whole course of the Hebrew history, that a state of things existed among that people similar to what we have just described. During the four hundred and fifty years in which every Israelite "did that which was good in his own eyes," there was no standing army, and the milita-

* Dan. i., 3, 4, 18. † 1 Kings ix., 19. ‡ Tavernier, "Seraglio," pp. 4, 5.

ry profession did not exist. In case of an invasion, a patriot "blew a trumpet," and gathered together the boldest spirits of one or two tribes, or even all that could bear arms "from Dan to Beersheba."* This system could not have been maintained so long, had it not been also practiced by their neighbors; accordingly, we have intimations that the desert tribes came up, like the modern Bedawin, just before the harvest, in order to reap where they had not sown, and carry off the crops;† while the dwellers in cities appear to have gone to war as soon as the crops had been gathered and they had nothing to do, *i. e.*, in the autumn. Under the kings, there was a small standing army, corresponding to the fifty thousand janissaries of Turkey, and to the twelve thousand *janbaz* of the Shah of Persia, with the *serbaz* troops kept by the royal princes. Horses were not common; they were mostly used for war purposes, either in drawing chariots or for cavalry, being kept in garrison when not in active service.‡ But when a national danger arose, or a martial enterprise was projected, which required larger forces, the king gathered together as many of the people as the occasion appeared to demand.§ All the neighboring kingdoms, and even the Greek republics, practiced the same system.

These sudden calls to the people to bear arms gave occasion to the numbering of all such as were capable of military service; for upon such an estimate must necessarily depend many plans of either defense or offense,‖ as well as a just apportionment of military service. The first census among the Hebrews occurred early in their history, while they were yet in the wilderness; and it had the Divine sanction.¶ David's numbering of the people must have been based upon some improper motive, for it was disapproved by his general in chief.** It may have been a foolish vanity, or pride; or the king may have cherished some improper plan of conquest or revenge, which was providentially thwarted by an epidemic (ver. 15). We have already stated that no census, properly speaking, is ever taken in the East, and that the taxes are assessed upon the households. But a record is kept of all who have reached the

* Judg. iii., 27; iv., 6; vi., 35; xx., 1; 1 Sam. xv., 4, etc.
† Judg. vi., 1–5.
‡ 1 Kings x., 26.
§ 1 Kings xii., 21; xx., 15; 2 Kings iii., 6.
‖ Luke xiv., 31.
¶ Numb. i., 3.
** 2 Sam. xxiv., 2–4.

age of eighteen, and are, therefore, deemed capable of bearing arms; they are often spoken of as so many guns or muskets. From this enumeration Christians and Jews are excluded, not being allowed to own or carry arms, and paying the *kharach*, or capitation tax. The profession of paganism is punishable with death. The pagan tribes profess Islam, and perform military duty. The same mode of numbering the people is practiced in Persia.*

Though military affairs have greatly changed the world over since the invention of fire-arms, yet enough is left to illustrate the ancient mode of warfare, and to point out the historical or traditional connection between the old and the new. We shall but briefly allude to this subject.

It has often been remarked by foreigners that there is in all the East an unwonted fellow-feeling and sense of equality between officers and men, which exerts an unfavorable influence upon discipline and the efficiency of an army.† This may be attributed to the fact that the officers are not superior to the men in education, being all taken from the ranks. Some think the cause lies in the fact that there is no aristocracy in the land, and that all the religious systems in vogue equally inculcate the common brotherhood of mankind. But it is probably the result, mainly, of the somewhat primitive mode of fighting which has ever prevailed in those countries. Military tactics have never been studied by officers. There has, however, always been more or less of arrangement in ranks, as pictured in some of the Egyptian sculptures, which represent bodies of archers and of shielded warriors.‡ Yet personal prowess and physical strength have ever been deemed the highest qualities of the soldier. So the heroes of Homer were not great tacticians but grand fighters, copying Hercules as their model, rather than inspired by Minerva. The generals and leaders of David's forces were all men who had distinguished themselves in personal encounters;§ and even King David owed his military reputation to his successful contest with Goliath, who had for forty days arrested the whole army of the Israelites.‖ This

* Perkins, p. 10. † Spencer, vol. ii., p. 221; Lynch, p. 237.

‡ Wilkinson, vol. ii., pp. 339, 341, 400, 405. See also "Travels in little known Parts of Asia Minor," vol. ii., pp. 123, 141.

§ 2 Sam. xxiii., 8–23. ‖ 1 Sam. xviii., 7.

feeling of equality between officers and men is, indeed, nowhere specially mentioned in Scripture; but it is implied by incidents occasionally thrown into the narrative.*

Another trait worthy of notice in the Oriental soldier is his extreme frugality, and his capacity to endure hunger and thirst without a murmur. .This doubtless arises from the circumstances of the people, which have fostered these qualities to a degree probably unsurpassed in any other part of the world. The Arab in the Desert contents himself with camel's milk, a few dates, or even "locusts and wild honey," and quenches his thirst with a draught of brackish water. Everywhere else oft-recurring warfare, occasional sieges, flights to the mountains and caves, living on herbs and roots, frequent and sudden changes of fortune occurring even in the quietest times, the occasional general famines and epidemics which sweep over the land,† the hardships and dangers of Oriental travel—all these have ever conspired to give the people of the East a wonderful power of endurance. An army never burdens itself with our cumbersome commissariat. A piece of bread, with a few olives, or a bit of cheese, or even a little meal, satisfies alike the hardy soldier and his commander. They both sleep on the bare earth under the canopy of heaven for months together.‡ So Jesse sent the lad David to the camp of Israel with no better luxury from home for his fighting boys than "an ephah (three pecks) of parched corn (wheat) and ten loaves of bread;" while he sent their captain not even a lamb or a kid, but ten small cheeses, to induce him to look well after the young men, and not lay too heavy burdens upon them.§

We have shown, in a former chapter, that the modern inhabitants of Bible lands wear essentially the same dress as the ancients. The invention of gunpowder has brought about a complete revolution throughout Europe in the mode of warfare. But this change has yet been only partially adopted in the East. Guns and pistols are, indeed, common in all parts of the land. Yet few of these weapons are made in the country: the barrels come from Europe, and are usually old-fashioned cast-off muskets, while the stocks, of native manufacture, are of

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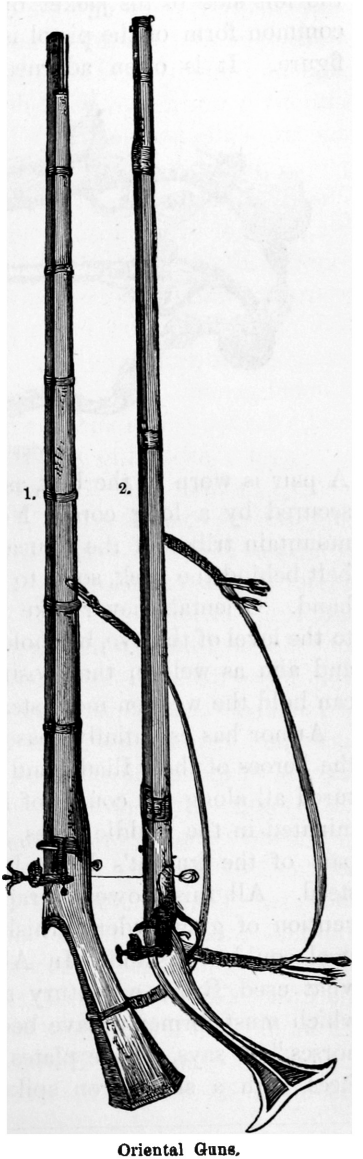
* 2 Sam. xxiii., 15, 16.

† 1 Kings xvii.

‡ Spencer, vol. ii., p. 221.

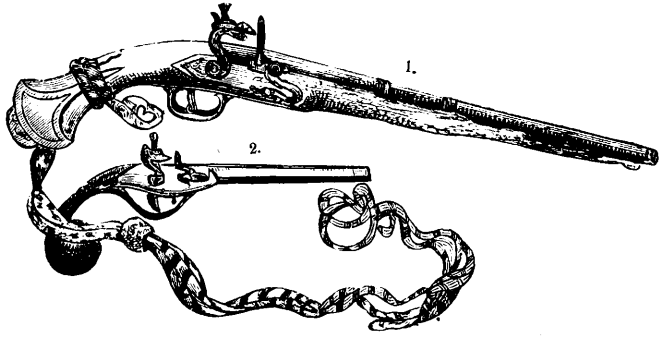
§ 1 Sam. xvii., 17, 18.

such a shape that no European could use them. There is so strong a prejudice against percussion-locks that they are uniformly changed to flint. But these weapons are rarely seen in the Desert, where the long tufted lance, the javelin, the buckler, and the sword prevail. Even in Koordistan and Circassia, where nearly every man owns a pistol or a gun, and is a practiced shot, they nevertheless chiefly rely upon the old weapons, and use them with great dexterity. We reproduce the exact forms of the guns and pistols in most general use, which may give an idea of Oriental taste in such matters. No. 1 is the common form of the gun with wooden stock; it is a heavy smooth-bore, and carries a ball from one hundred and fifty to two hundred yards. Every sportsman makes his own powder, which being weak, a charge has to contain three or four times as much as one of ours; and it fouls the barrel badly. All their guns are single-barreled. Few persons ever use shot, or attempt to drop a bird on the wing. No. 2 is a much lighter gun, with a steel stock. It is chiefly used by the Albanian irregular gendarmes throughout the country. The Oriental hunter carries his gun not *upon* but *under* his left shoulder, slung by a short strap, while



Oriental Guns.

the left hand rests upon the stock and steadies the weapon. Hence a sportsman is always known by the rent made upon the left side of his jacket by the rubbing of the lock. The common form of the pistol is shown at No. 1 of the annexed figure. It is often adorned with plates of silver or gold.



Oriental Pistols.

A pair is worn in the belt, as shown on page 514, each being secured by a long cord. No. 2 is exclusively used by the mountain tribes of the Caucasus, and is worn in the leathern belt behind the back, so as to be within easy reach of the right hand. Orientals never take aim with a pistol by raising it to the level of the eye, but hold it a little lower than the breast, and aim as well in that position as in the other, while they can hold the weapon more steadily.

Armor has essentially ceased to be used. It was worn by the heroes of the "Iliad," and is frequently described and pictured all along the course of history.* Defensive armor culminated in the Middle Ages, when it not only covered every part of the knight's body, but also protected his powerful steed. All this, however, rapidly disappeared when the invention of gunpowder furnished an agent of destruction no steel could withstand. In Abyssinia, where it is yet somewhat used, Bruce a century ago described a kind of armor which must formerly have been common in the East. "The horses," he says, "have plates of brass upon their cheeks and faces, with a sharp iron spike about five inches long stuck

* 1 Sam. xvii., 38; 1 Kings xxii., 34; Isa. lix., 17; Eph. vi., 14; 1 Thess. v., 8; Rev. ix., 9.

in the middle of the forehead; their bridles are of iron chains; the body of the horse is covered with a quilt of cotton, having two openings to receive the legs of the rider, protecting him below the thighs. Above this the horseman is covered with a shirt of mail, formed of iron rings, or chain-work. He wears upon his head a helmet of copper or block-tin, with large crests of black horse-tail, with a silver star upon the front, while a flap of iron chain, made in the same manner as the coat of mail, but only lighter, serves as a visor. The weapons consist of a small axe fastened to the saddle, and a lance fourteen feet long, very light, and balanced with iron at each end."*

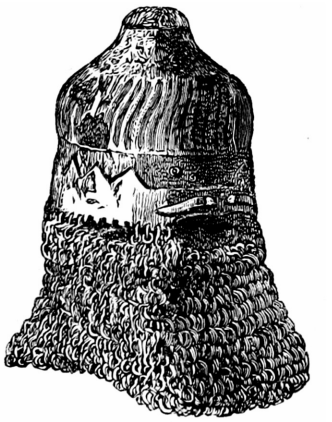


Cotton-mailed Cavalry of Begharmi, in Central Africa.

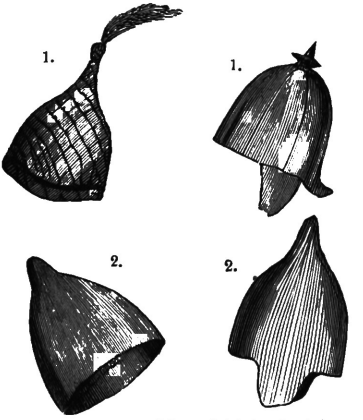
Chain mail is still worn in a great part of Asia, among the Koords, Arabs, Persians, Hindoos, etc., and in Africa, not only by the Abyssinians, but by many other tribes of the North.† The cotton armor, for both man and horse, is now used in Central Africa, particularly in Begharmi, near Lake Tsad, according to Denham and Clapperton. We give an excellent

* Bruce, vol. iv., pp. 580–582. † Denham and Clapperton, vol. i., p. 210.

picture of it, taken from their interesting work, which has now become rare. We have in our possession a Turkish helmet of steel which corresponds to the foregoing description. It must have been worn over a turban, and there is a place for inserting a plume.* We also reproduce some other forms of the helmet still preserved at Constantinople, with the corresponding types taken from the Assyrian sculptures.



Turkish Helmet. (2 Chron. xxvi., 14.)



(1) Modern Turkish and (2) Ancient Assyrian Helmets.

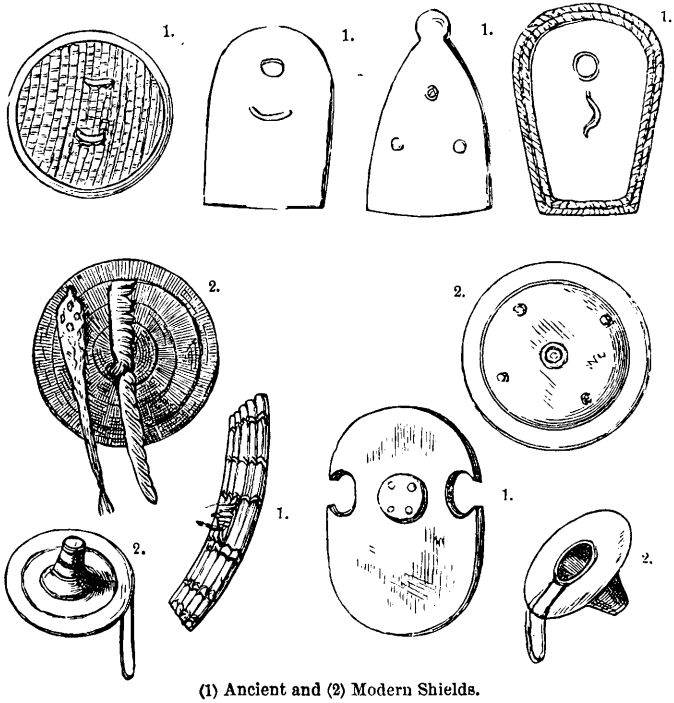
The double row of twelve cartridge cases, each worn by the Circassian warriors, affords considerable protection even against a ball, whether they be made of brass or tin. (See page 371.) The thick woolen coat (aba), usually worn in military expeditions, also offers a pretty effectual protection, even against Oriental fire-arms. Two hundred years ago the shield was generally carried by warriors in Turkey, and parade horses bore a shield.† It is still in use among the Arabs of the Desert, the Koords, and the Abyssinians. The latter make it of buffalo hide, a yard in diameter, round, and sufficiently convex to throw off a spear. It is often plated with silver or brass, and ornamented with a piece of lion's mane or tail. It is held by a leather strap in the centre—with the hand when fighting, but fastened to the arm when traveling.‡ The Arab and the Koordish shields closely resemble, both in form and in their

* Tavernier, "Seraglio," p. 90.

† Thevenot, part i., p. 148.

‡ Parkyns, vol. ii., p. 18.

ornaments, the round bucklers so often portrayed upon the Khorsabad sculptures. They are made of the imported hide of the hippopotamus, or simply of buffalo skin. But some of those pictured at Koyoonjik are oval, large enough to cover the greater part of the body, and very convex; they are constructed of wicker-work, and covered with hides.* There is also a small shield used by the Arabs of the southern coast,



(1) Ancient and (2) Modern Shields.

which is made of the skin of a fish.† The Circassian warrior uses a broad dagger instead of a shield, holding it in his left hand while he fights, and dexterously parrying his enemy's blows, whether given with the sword, spear, or lance.‡ This dagger is eighteen inches long, with a broad blade, and hangs from the belt in front, so that it can be quickly seized with either hand. We need not search the Scriptures for texts

* Layard, vol. ii., p. 266.
† Morier, "Second Journey," p. 29.
‡ Spencer, vol. ii., p. 181.

which prove the use of shields among the Hebrews, for allusions to them are of frequent occurrence.* But we are left to conjecture as to their form, which was probably similar to those of neighboring nations. Some of them, we are told, were made of solid gold, as Solomon's for his body-guard, as well as the buckler of Hadadezer, king of Zobah.† Goliath had a shield of brass,‡ and such were those of Rehoboam's guards.§ The custom of having bosses upon the buckler is at least as old as Job's time.‖

It is not the Circassians alone, however, who carry daggers in their belts. No Oriental costume is complete without it; even the ministers of religion are not always excepted. Women sometimes wear it; and the handsomer the dress, the finer must the dagger be. The handle is often adorned with precious stones, and the velvet sheath covered with gold or silver. But it is chiefly used not as a weapon, but as a pocket-knife. This was also the custom of the ancients.¶ According to the Assyrian sculptures, "the dagger appears to have been carried by all, both in time of peace and war; even the priests and divinities are represented with them."**

The long spear, or lance, is now mostly confined to the Arabs, Koords, and Persians. It is made of a brown reed, light but firm, which grows in the marshes of the lower Euphrates and Tigris. It is twelve to fourteen feet long, is armed with an iron blade, and provided at the other end with an iron point, by which the spear is planted in the ground and the rider's horse is tied to it; this is the signal for the tribe to stop and encamp: it also marks the spot where the sheikh may be found. It is stuck at his tent door, or by his side in the open air. Thus "Saul lay sleeping within the circle of the baggage, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster, and Abner and the people lay round about him."†† The lance is often provided with a tuft of black ostrich-feathers, or wool, fastened near the blade, to steady it when hurled at an enemy.

The shorter spear, or javelin, has ever been and still is more extensively used than the other. The Scriptures contain many

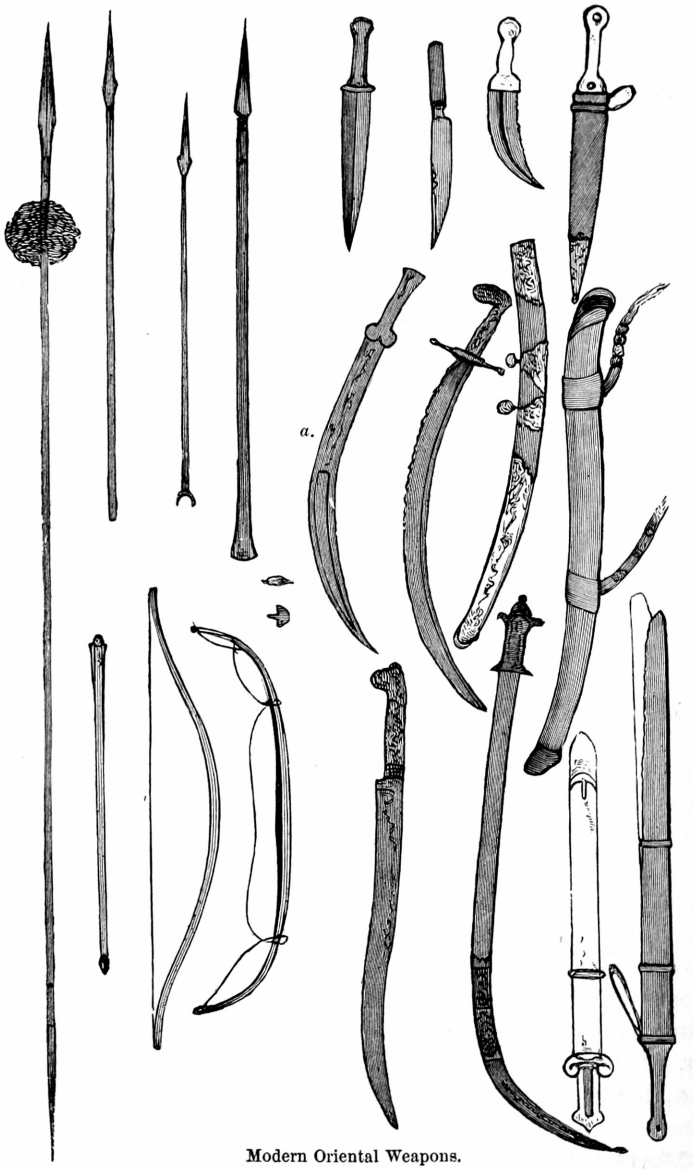
* 1 Chron. v., 18; 2 Chron. xxiii., 9. † 1 Kings x., 17; 2 Sam. viii., 7.
‡ 1 Sam. xvii., 6. § 1 Kings xiv., 27. ‖ Job xv., 26.
¶ Gen. xxii., 10; Jer. xxxvi., 23. ** Layard, vol. ii., p. 264.
†† 1 Sam. xxvi., 7; Morier. "Second Journey," p. 115.

allusions to this weapon, which show that it was, together with the sword, the chief reliance of the Hebrews.* We also gather from the same source that it was armed with a point of shining steel,† and was often hurled at an enemy.‡ But our knowledge of it as used by the moderns enables us to fill up this incomplete picture. It varies in size and weight in different countries. The Abyssinians use the longest and heaviest, being over seven feet, including the iron head, which is kept highly polished and smeared with grease to prevent rusting. It is made of hard wood, carefully dried, straightened, browned by fire, and greased. But they have a lighter sort, made of bamboo, and three and a half or four feet long.§ The Circassians have a notch at one end of their spears, and use them as rests for their guns when shooting; but they also hurl this weapon with great dexterity. In the swampy plains of Lower Mesopotamia the sportsmen pursue the wild boar on horseback, and pierce it with the javelin held in the hand. But the blunt javelin is most extensively used, being indispensable in the game of the jerid, already described page 222. It will there be seen with what force it is sometimes thrown by a practiced hand, showing that there is nothing incredible in the account of Asahel's death by Abner.‖ We have, also, an instance of the force with which the iron-pointed spear may be hurled, in the feat of Sultan Moorad (Amurat), who, with a single throw of his javelin, pierced three shields of hippopotamus hide, a trophy preserved in one of the halls of the Castle of Cairo.¶

But the sword has ever been the symbol of war,** and the emblem of power.†† Most of the blood shed upon the earth has been spilt by the sharp edge of this weapon, and whatever new invention has refined the art of killing, the sword has never been wholly superseded. We form some conception of the terrible havoc it may commit when wielded by a powerful warrior, when we read the statement contained in 2 Sam. xxiii., 10, *i. e.*, that Eleazar, son of Dodo, one of David's three mighty men,

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* See particularly Judg. v., 8; 1 Sam. xiii., 22; xvii., 45; 2 Chron. xi., 12.
† Job xxxix., 23; Jer. xlvi., 4; Hab. iii., 11.
‡ Job xli., 29.
§ Parkyns, vol. i., p. 303.
‖ 2 Sam. ii., 23.
¶ Thevenot, p. 142; Pococke, vol. i., p. 33.
** Lev. xxvi., 25.
†† Deut. xxxiii., 29.



Modern Oriental Weapons.

"smote the Philistines until his hand was weary; and his hand clave unto the sword." We have a modern counterpart of this incident in an occurrence which took place during the

late massacre of the Christians of Mount Lebanon by the Druses: Sheikh Ali Amad's hand, at the close of the butchery, so clave to the handle of his sword that he could not open it until the muscles were relaxed by repeated applications of hot water. (!)

The nations of the earth have been distinguished from each other by their deadly weapons, and among them the different forms of the sword have been most conspicuous. This is noticeable in the Egyptian and Assyrian monuments, upon which wars with numerous tribes are often represented. The short two-edged sword of the Romans is believed by some to account for their extraordinary military success. That of the Greeks was longer, one-edged, and broadest near the point.* The form of the Oriental sword is well known; it is called cimeter, for what reason it is hard to say. Its form is a regular curve; and, unlike other swords, it does its work, not by a single hard blow, but by drawing all its curved edge through the object to be cut. The difference between the Occidental and the Oriental weapon is well expressed in the story of the trial of swords between Richard Cœur de Lion and Saladin, in Scott's "Talisman," chap. xxxvii. The former, with a single blow from his two-handed blade, clave asunder "a steel mace about one inch and a half in diameter; and the sultan cut in two, from top to bottom, a cushion of silk and down"—he should have said, filled with wool—which he had set up on end.

The difference in the mode of using this weapon accounts for the fact that the Occidental broad-sword is heavy, being sometimes even charged with quicksilver; while the Oriental cimeter is made as light as possible, a deep groove running the whole length of the blade for this purpose, as may also be seen in the Egyptian sword in our illustration (*a*), which closely resembles it in form. The materials of which are made the so-called "Damascus blades" are blended in a manner truly wonderful. Two pieces of steel, of different degrees of hardness, are said to be drawn out into fine wires and welded together so as to assume the appearance of beautiful, almost microscopic flowers. The process is claimed to be yet a secret, and a popular myth connects it with the use of a peculiar herb mixed with

* Gargiulo, "Naples Museum," vol. iv., plates 31, 55–57.

the steel in the crucible, accompanied by prayers and incantations. These swords are highly valued, and the price of the blade alone, for the best quality (*daban*), is never less than five hundred dollars. But other forms of the weapon are also found in the East, some of which are peculiar to those countries. The Southern Arabs use a straight sword, very much like the European. The peculiarly Oriental yataghan, as long as a sword, and worn in the belt, may be seen in our illustration. The Abyssinian sword is crooked near the end, and must be an exceedingly awkward weapon.

The Circassians use bows and arrows only upon a secret military expedition, or when their supply of powder or fire-arms has failed.* Some of the Persians shoot the arrow with great dexterity, chiefly as a pastime. Horsemen pick up arrows from the ground with a stick armed with an iron hook, such as is used in the game of the jerid.† Among the Turks archery is now confined to the sultans, who merely conform to an old custom.

Many of the ruinous castles of Turkey still contain the mouldering remains of broken armor, and particularly of arrows, which were there stowed away for the use of the garrison. Old arrow-heads are not unfrequently found in ancient battle-fields, when the farmer plows the soil made fat by the blood of the slain. Many such are found near the spot where Xerxes led his army across the Hellespont to the invasion of Greece. All these specimens, both ancient and modern, and the monuments of antiquity, enable us to form a distinct idea of these weapons as they were used in Bible times.‡

The Macedonians, it has been thought, owed most of their victories to the serried ranks, long spears, and high shields of their phalanx; while the strength of the Roman army lay in the cohort, armed with a buckler, a short two-edged sword for a close encounter, and a javelin for a foe farther off. But the main strength of the Oriental hosts has ever consisted in their cavalry, whose splendid horses were mounted by men used to the saddle from childhood. They originally used chariots, as may be seen in the history of Egypt, Nineveh, and Babylon,

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* Spencer, vol. ii., pp. 181, 209.

† Thevenot, p. 235.

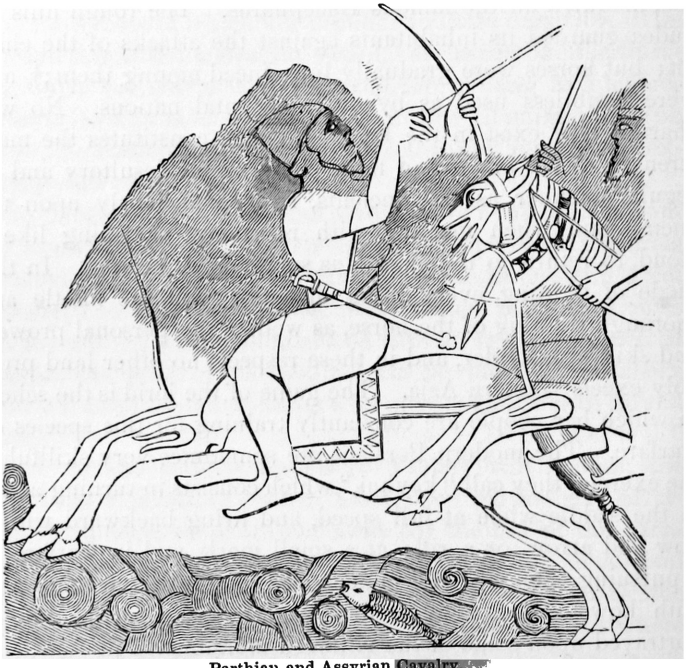
‡ Gen. xxvii., 3; 2 Kings ix., 24; Lam. iii., 12.

and in the exploits of Homer's heroes. But even as early as the Hebrew exodus cavalry was a recognized element in the Egyptian armies.* Cyrus and Cresus fought each other with cavalry, and Alexander the Great always led his own in person, mounted on the famous Bucephalus. The rough hills of Judea guarded its inhabitants against the attacks of the chariot; but horses were gradually introduced among them;† and were doubtless used as by other Oriental nations. No war chariots now exist in the East. Cavalry constitutes the main strength of the army, and fight in the same desultory and irregular manner as the ancients, rushing furiously upon the enemy, and when meeting with resistance, vanishing like a cloud, to return to the charge as suddenly as before.‡ In this mode of fighting, every thing depends upon the mettle and thorough training of the horse, as well as the personal prowess and skill of his rider, and in these respects no other land probably excels Western Asia. The game of the jerid is the school in which her people are constantly training for this species of warfare. The modern Persians are sometimes very skillful in the exercise they call "keykaj," which consists in turning about in the saddle when at full speed, and firing backward with a bow and arrow, or a rifle, at a small mark, and in warfare at a pursuing enemy.§ Their ancestors fought in the same way with bows and arrows, as described by Xenophon,‖ and as portrayed upon some of the Nineveh monuments.¶

The Koords are generally better horsemen than the Turks. As for the Circassians, their long-protracted struggle for independence against the whole power of Russia has developed their energies to a wonderful degree. They are frugal, hardy, almost constantly in the field, and ever ready to move at the signal of the watch-fire. Such is the admirable training of both horse and rider, that their feats almost pass belief. A Circassian warrior will spring from the saddle to the earth, plunge his dagger into the breast of his enemy's horse, vault again into the saddle, then stand erect on the horse's back, and fire his gun at his adversary, or hit a mark, his horse all

* Exod. xiv., 9; 2 Chron. xii., 3. † 1 Kings ix., 19; 2 Kings xiii., 7.
‡ Burton, "Pilgrimage," p. 169. § Morier, "Second Journey," p. 169.
‖ Xenophon, "Anabasis," vol. iii., p. 3; Virgil, "Georgics," vol. iii., p. 31.
¶ Layard, vol. ii., p. 297.

the while running at full speed. But the most wonderful display of skill is made in the single combats between them and the Chernemorsky Cossaks, who alone dare thus to encounter the Cherkess, though they are almost always vanquished.



Parthian and Assyrian Cavalry.

These duels in the presence of two opposing armies, like that between David and Goliath, have ever been in high repute among Orientals, both in ancient and modern times. The challenge is courteously given and accepted, and the rest observe a strict neutrality. We give the account of a Russian officer who had been an eye-witness. The combatants usually commence the attack at full gallop with the light musket; but so well trained are they both, that the first fire rarely takes effect, as they either jump from the saddle, or throw themselves on one side in order to avoid the ball. Sometimes they reserve their charge, and, like a snake preparing to dart upon its prey, each watches for the moment when his adversary is off his guard in order to fire. After this first encounter with fire-arms they meet at full gallop, sword in hand, strike and

parry, turn quickly round; then the death-struggle commences, in which one or the other is almost sure to fall.*

What adds not a little to the effect of the sudden and dashing onslaught of Oriental cavalry is the war-cry, almost identical in all the nations of Western Asia. Among the Circassians it is described as closely resembling the yelping of a company of jackals: we have heard it among the Arabs, and can compare it to nothing else; but it is hard to describe to those who have never heard the cry of that animal.

It is a singular fact that women have not unfrequently fought, like the Eastern Amazons of old, by the side of the men, and have equaled them in courage and fortitude. During the late Crimean war, Kara Fatmeh, aged about seventy, came to Constantinople at the head of a Koordish tribe, to offer her services to the sultan in fighting against the infidels; and during her stay at the capital, she proved herself equal to any of the stronger sex in warlike or equestrian exercises. Tavernier speaks of another case, the wife of a Persian khan, who, when her husband had been taken prisoner, "put herself at the head of five hundred horse, and making a stealthy attack, not only delivered him, but killed his enemy with her own hand, and carried away ten or twelve of his women."† The foregoing instances show that there exists nothing in the least degree improbable in the Scripture account of the killing of Sisera by Jael, or that of Holofernes by Judith, as related in the Apocrypha.

Standards have been used from time immemorial in the East, as rallying-points for the soldiers. They frequently occur upon the monuments of Egypt, Assyria, and Persepolis.‡ They would seem originally to have borne an image of one of their gods which was worshiped by the army, and was supposed to insure them victory, just as the Israelites carried the ark of God to battle for the same purpose.§ This is doubtless the meaning of the expression in Jer. xlvi., 16: "Fly from the sword of the destroying dove."‖ The Assyrians bore the im-

* Spencer, vol. ii., p. 223. † Tavernier, p. 217.

‡ Wilkinson, vol. i., p. 343; Bonomi, p. 258, figs. 110, 112, 127; Morier, "First Journey," pp. 124, 127. § 1 Sam. iv., 3.

‖ The original Hebrew is susceptible of this rendering, though translated in our version, "from the oppressing sword."—PRIDEAUX, vol. ii., p. 225.

age of a dove upon their standards, being one of the emblems of Semiramis, or Astarte (Venus). We know that the Greeks and Romans early used the standards as mere rallying-points for the soldiers; and they bore various emblems, the eagle being the chief with the latter people. They were often gilded to render them more conspicuous. There is no doubt, however, that the flag was early used for the same purpose, even long before the black fumes of gunpowder had required its exclusive adoption. There are distinct intimations in Scripture that the Hebrews made use both of standards* and of banners.† Every nation in the world now has its national flag, as well as subsidiary or secondary colors. Mohammed's old flag, it is claimed, still exists at Constantinople. It is the famous *Sanjak Sherif*, which is never unfurled except in seasons of great public danger. Its color is apple-green, and upon it are embroidered the words, "Nasroom min Allah" (Our help is in God). But the national colors of the Osmanli are red, with a white crescent and star—an emblem of Venus, which they adopted at the capture of Constantinople, formerly called Byzantium, and dedicated to that goddess. The Turks also use a standard for the cavalry, which bears a horse's tail. The Persian flag is white, with a yellow lion and the rising sun. The colors of the famous Saladin in the Middle Ages were of a bright yellow.‡

We who enjoy the gentle influences of Christian civilization can hardly realize that there was a time when the life and property of the vanquished was thought rightfully to belong to the conqueror. Yet this was the case not long ago, even in Europe, and so it is still throughout the East. The Hebrew nation, at the time of the Conquest, had a peculiar reason for acting on this principle, which has existed in no other case; they were the appointed executioners to carry out the Divine sentence against the nations whose "iniquity had become full."§ The nature and extent of this "iniquity" and degradation may be judged by the fact that their chief divinities were the cruel Baal, or Moloch, delighting in human sacrifices, and the lascivious Ashtaroth, and by the moral corruption of the "cities

* Numb. ii., 2; x., 14, etc.
† Psa. xx., 5; Cant. vi., 4.
‡ Michaud, "Croisades," vol. ii., p. 51.
§ Gen. xv., 16.

of the plain," whose punishment could not wait, but must be inflicted in Abraham's time.* It was, doubtless, the Divine plan to isolate the people of Israel from their heathen neighbors, and thus preserve the successive revelations of Divine truth. But the Hebrews did not fully obey the Divine command;† they allowed many of the heathen to remain among them, and in consequence repeatedly fell into idolatry. Their subsequent course in war was based upon the rule in Deut. xx., 10–14; it was an improvement upon the practice of the heathen around them. A somewhat adequate idea may be formed of the cruelties perpetrated in warfare, in Bible times, by those great foes of the Hebrews, the Assyrians and Babylonians, if we lay before our readers some well-authenticated instances of a similar character which have occurred in modern times in the East.

We learn from an eye-witness that, at the siege of Bagdad, then in the possession of the Persians, by Sultan Moorad (Amurat) in 1638, there were thirty thousand picked soldiers, officers, and khans, and twenty thousand volunteers in the city, according to the captured rolls; and these were all killed, mostly in cold blood, and after surrendering on condition of being spared! They were put to death by secret orders from the grand vizier, to whom the sultan gave a pelisse of honor for it. Not one escaped to carry the news into Persia.‡ Even the women and children were put to the sword, and four or five thousand valuable horses were hamstrung. This is worse than the treatment of the people of Samaria and Jerusalem by Shalmaneser and Nebuchadnezzar.§

The Persians of our day are in the habit, in time of war, of offering a reward, usually amounting to about fifty dollars, for every head of an enemy brought into camp. One of the effects of this practice may be seen by the following incident, related by a member of the British embassy fifty years ago: A fight occurred between the Russians and the Persians, in which the latter, being led by English officers, and using grape-shot for the first time, succeeded in killing about three hundred of the former. The rest of the Russians were finally compelled to

* Gen. xix., 4–11. † Numb. xxxi., 17. ‡ Judg. iii., 29; 1 Sam. xxx., 17.
§ 2 Kings xvii., 6; xxv., 10–12; 2 Chron. xxxvi., 17–20; Churchill, "Lebanon," vol. ii., p. 155, etc.

surrender, the Persians promising to spare them. In spite of this promise, however, the heads both of the wounded and of the prisoners were struck off in cold blood, and all were dispatched to the king, and deposited in heaps at the palace gate. Two of the English sergeants were killed on this occasion, and after the battle was over one of the bodies was found headless; but the missing member lay among the Russian heads. It had, doubtless, been severed by a Persian, who, passing it off for a Russian head, had received the price fixed for such a commodity.* Among the slabs taken from the ruined palaces of Nineveh are several which represent soldiers bringing the heads of the slain, while a scribe is putting down the amount, apparently, to every man's credit, writing with a pen upon a piece of parchment, and having an inkstand in his girdle; his companion is counting the heads aloud, striking his palm with a stick as he calls the numbers.† The Hebrews do not appear to have adopted this barbarous practice. The nearest approach to it occurred in the revolution led by Jehu; for a messenger came to him saying, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons. And he said, Lay ye them in two heaps at the entering in of the gate until the morning."‡ The words "until the morning" reveal the gentler character of Judaism, as compared even with Islam, which *salts* such trophies that they may last as long as possible, or sets them upon a pole, and keeps them there until they drop in pieces.§

The man who most fully reminds us of the cruel warriors of the ancient heathen world is the famous Tamerlane, or, more correctly, Timoor Lenk (Timoor the Lame), a Muslim, the conqueror of Sultan Bayezid, whom he is supposed to have carried about in an iron cage. At the siege of Ispahan (A.D. 1387) he spared the lives and houses only of artists and scholars, destroying the remainder of the city, and killing all its inhabitants. More than seventy thousand heads were laid at his feet, which he ordered his soldiers to pile up in the form of towers, in the public squares. But it was at Sebsewar he

* Morier, "Second Journey," p. 186. † Layard, vol. ii., p. 147.

‡ 2 Kings x., 8.

§ In Abyssinia, instead of heads, the trophies taken from the battle-field are the same as mentioned in 1 Sam. xviii., 25, 27, probably to prove that they are uncircumcised enemies.—BRUCE, vol. ii., p. 403; vol. iv., p. 652.

outdid even himself; for he piled up two thousand of the people alive, the one upon the other, with their heads upon the outside and their bodies built up with mortar, like stones or bricks. This last act of barbarism was imitated, only a few years ago, by the governor of a Persian province, some of whose victims lived several days, being fed by their friends; one of them, a negro, is said not to have died until the tenth day. This living tower was erected at one of the gates of Shiraz, and was yet standing at the time of Mr. Layard's visit.*

In connection with the treatment of unfortunate enemies, it may be proper to speak of the punishments inflicted upon offenders of every kind. Under the Mosaic dispensation there were several modes of applying capital punishment, *i. e.*, by stoning, which is the most primitive: it required a number of agents,† and certain forms were to be observed, in order to render it legal;‡ by hanging;§ and by the sword.‖ The first of these modes, or stoning, has now gone out of use, except in a lawless manner and by a mob.¶ Hanging has not been practiced except of late, in imitation of European manners.

The Romans crucified their victims, if they were slaves or foreigners. Orientals have often impaled theirs, a most barbarous mode of execution, of which the favored Occidental forms but little conception. A long stake, thick as a man's arm, and sharpened at one end, is driven through the entire body lengthwise, coming out at the breast or shoulders; the stake is then set upright and firmly fixed in the ground, a transverse piece serving as a seat to support the body of the sufferer, who is left to endure the torture for an entire day before he is killed. Men have sometimes lived three days in this terrible agony. The crimes for which these punishments are inflicted are often trifling—such as stealing a loaf of bread, or selling under-weight—or even of an imaginary character. It should, however, be stated that, owing to the influence of the Christian civilization of the West, no execution of this sort has occurred for the last quarter of a century. It seems to have been unknown to the Jews, but was much practiced by

* Bonomi, p. 32. See also the sketch of Djezzar Pasha, of Acre, in Churchill, "Lebanon," vol. i., p. 194, etc.

† Lev. xxiv., 14. ‡ Acts vii., 58. § Deut. xxi., 23.

‖ Numb. xxxv., 27. ¶ Exod. xvii., 4.

their heathen neighbors; for among the sculptures of a palace at Khorsabad occurs the representation of a siege, with a long line of impaled prisoners set up in full view of the besieged;* and history informs us that Darius impaled three thousand of the chief nobility of Babylon.† Nor were the heathen sparing of other cruelties to their victims. They passed a ring



The Ring in the Nose. (2 Kings xix., 28.)

through the nose or lip, as is done to wild beasts, and led their captives to the king, who sometimes put out their eyes; thus illustrating the passage of Scripture, "I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips,"‡ spoken to the Assyrian king, who practiced this very thing upon his vanquished foes.§

The Turks, like the ancients, rivet heavy chains to the hands and feet of their criminals, and keep them for years in loath-

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* Bonomi, p. 219, fig. 91.

† Herodotus, bk. iii., p. 159.

‡ 2 Kings xix., 28.

§ Layard, vol. ii., p. 288.

some prisons, often under-ground, their only recreation consisting in hard labor on the public works, fastened two and two, and carrying their heavy chain with one hand while they work with the other.* After such preliminary statements one is not surprised to learn that, like the ancient heathen, the modern Muslims are wont to show little or no mercy to their victims; they have often flayed alive their enemies, stuffed their skins, and carried them about as trophies. Thus a Nineveh slab represents a prisoner tied down by the hands and feet, with a countenance expressive of intense agony, while the savage executioner takes off his skin with a knife.† The Osmanlis usually make a distinction in the mode of execution according to the rank of the condemned. The sultan has been wont to send a chaoosh, or royal messenger, to the doomed pasha, with an imperial firman ordering his execution; upon receiving which the submissive official would bare his neck without a murmur, and be strangled on the spot with a bow-string. His head was then cut off, and conveyed in a bag to the master as proof that the deed was done.

The common people were taken off in a variety of ways, but according to certain rules, which, however, varied in different parts of the country. Renegades were wrapped in tar-cloth and set on fire; or they were built around with masonry, the head alone being left out and smeared with honey for the bees and flies to torment them, after which they were put to death. A slave who killed a Muslim had his legs and arms broken, was tied to a horse's tail, dragged about, and finally strangled.‡ But we should never finish this list of horrors, were we to attempt even a brief description of them all. The curious reader will find it in works which treat particularly of such matters.§ Suffice it to say that the chief punishments inflicted are the following: mutilation of limbs, strangling, beheading, impaling, cutting out the tongue, putting out the eyes, killing, and throwing the body to the dogs; while the bastinado, or striking the soles of the feet with rods, and the cutting

* Bonomi, p. 191; 2 Chron. xxxiii., 11; xxxvi., 6.

† Bonomi, p. 192, fig. 70.

‡ Thevenot, p. 279.

§ Tavernier, pp. 215, 218; Perkins, p. 291; Morier, "First Journey," pp. 80, 204; "Second Journey," p. 96; Lane, vol. i., p. 156; Churchill, vol. iii., p. 384; Bruce, vol. ii., pp. 391, 403; vol. iii., pp. 139, 197; vol. iv., p. 652.

off of the ears, or nailing them to a post, were deemed mere trifles.*

The prisons of the East correspond to the cruelties we have just described. They could hardly have been better contrived had they been planned for the purpose of destroying by a lingering death. Jeremiah was "cast into the dungeon of Malcaiah, into which he was let down with cords; in the dungeon there was no water, but mire; so Jeremiah sunk in the mire."† We have seen the "inner prison" at Rome, where the apostle Paul was let down, and Jugurtha died of hunger. These are supposed to be the fruits of a barbarous age; yet the Romans were the most civilized heathen of any age, being surpassed in their time only by the Hebrews. But twenty centuries appear to have produced no change in the East in this matter. We have visited many a prison in the Levant; we have seen maniacs confined in the same dungeon with criminals, and have often wondered how the latter could preserve their reason in such a spot, or how it could remain so full with so large a mortality. The latter is not only the result of intolerable filth and want of ventilation, but also of the lack of rest, the excess of vermin, the heavy chain, and the unmerciful stocks in which the feet are "made fast."‡ We may well pity virtuous Joseph, if he was indeed cast, as claimed by tradition, into the present dungeon of the citadel of Cairo, which is "composed of dark, loathsome, and pestilential passages, where the prisoners' feet are made fast in the stocks; they are chained to the wall, and cold water in buckets is poured upon them until they have given up all their money to their tormentors." This prison has been called "a hell upon earth" by a humane traveler; but there is scarcely one Turkish prison that does not well deserve the name this very day.§ And yet there are worse places than even these. An Englishman has described the prisons in which Shamyl, so often called the Circassian hero, used to confine his Russian prisoners. They consisted of circular pits dug in the ground for storing grain, and were twenty-five feet deep and ten wide. The top was covered with flag-stones having a small hole for the admission of air, and letting in the rain and

* Wilkinson, vol. ii., p. 211.
† Jer. xxxviii., 6.
‡ Acts xvi., 24.
§ Thevenot, p. 141.

snow as well. The prisoners were kept in these dungeons for weeks together, and removed only to cleanse the place, being drawn out and let down again with ropes.*

It is pleasant to know that the present governments of Western Asia and North-eastern Africa have taken a decided stand for reform and humanity, and are abolishing these barbarous customs and practices, as a condition to being tolerated by the great nations of Europe. But many are now living who well remember the recently prevailing state of things, and events occasionally occur which revive their memories. Thirty years have not elapsed since the many causeless executions had created the popular belief that every pasha could put to death daily, without showing cause, a number of men equal to that of the horse-tail standards carried before him, which indicated his rank; and no one doubted that the sultan himself could lawfully order the execution of as many of his subjects as he chose.† Not long ago the Turks had the reputation of taking off a man's head with wonderful dexterity, holding it by the hair, and severing it at a single blow with a cimeter or yataghan; and many ever stood ready to volunteer to do it, in order to keep their hand in. But now the chief reason why hanging, which is deemed dishonorable, is resorted to, is the fact that a man can rarely be found capable of performing the act of decapitation decently, and that few are even willing to try.‡

We conclude from the foregoing statements that the Hebrews were decidedly in advance of their neighbors with regard to the humane treatment of enemies and the punishment of crime, and that the followers of Mohammed have, throughout their entire career, been little if any better than the heathen. Indeed, they have often imitated the latter even by involving a man's wife and children in his ruin.§ This was forbidden to the Jews by the Mosaic law.‖ The Muslim law allows the commutation of the death penalty for money, in case the nearest relatives give their consent, while the Jewish law only provides that reparation for the death of a slave gored by an ox shall be made in money, and the *ox shall be killed.*¶ But there

* Ussher, p. 173. † Lane, vol. i., p. 139; Bruce, vol. iii., p. 608.
‡ "Travels in Asia Minor," vol. ii., p. 28.
§ "Arabian Nights," p. 81; Dan. vi., 24. ‖ Deut. xxiv., 16.
¶ Numb. xxxv., 31, 32.

is a resemblance in sound between the two cases as to the amount, which with the Jews was thirty shekels of silver, and with the Muslims thirty thousand piasters, a sum few are able to pay.* Mohammed has copied Moses, in appointing retaliatory punishments in many cases—"an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."†

By the Mosaic law six cities were appointed, to which the homicide might flee, and find a refuge from the "avenger of blood."‡ It was a wise provision against the blood feuds which then prevailed, and are still common in many parts of the country, and among the Arabs in particular. This is pushed so far among some tribes, especially those of Saad and Haram in the Nile delta, that blood revenge is sometimes taken a century after the deed, and when it had been forgotten by all but the lineal avenger himself.§ This practice, however, is by no means confined to the Arab race; it prevails among all clannish people ruled by the patriarchal system, among the independent tribes of the Caucasus, whether Circassian, Lesghi, or Nogay, as well as on the adjoining continent, among the Greeks, Arnaoots, and Suliots. We have heard of two cases, one in the Aool of Ratloo, in the Caucasus, the other in a village of the district of Maina (Sparta), in the Morea, where the male population was divided into two parties by a blood feud, and had to shut themselves up in two strong towers within gunshot of each other. This state of things lasted in the one case more than twenty years, neither party daring to show themselves, and the women in the mean time tilling the ground and doing all the out-of-door work, while the men kept the house.‖

The remedy applied to this evil by the Mosaic law was at once simple and effectual. The homicide fled to the "city of refuge," whose inhabitants protected him until his case could be investigated, when, if guilty of murder, he was put to death, not by the "avenger of blood," but by the regular magistrates; but if found guilty only of an involuntary homicide, he was

* Among the ancient Greeks, also, murder could be compensated by the payment of money, according to the social status of the victim, with the consent of the nearest relation.—GILLIES, "Greece," vol. i., chap. ii.

† Lev. xxiv., 20; Lane, vol. i., p. 133.

‡ Numb. xxxv., 13, etc.

§ Lane, vol. i., p. 248.

‖ Ussher, p. 180.

confined within the bounds of the city until the death of the high-priest, both as a protection against his enemy, and as a punishment for any carelessness of which he may have been guilty. Any one killing him within the city, or out of it, after his lawful release, would be guilty of murder, and be dealt with accordingly.* The nearest approach to this among the heathen was the protection afforded to criminals within the precincts of certain temples; but this also existed among the Hebrews, who sought protection against the execution of the law, or the wrath of the prince, by laying hold of the horns of the altar of the Lord.† With Muslims, the shrines or tombs of great saints, like that of Hosein at Kerbelah, near Bagdad, and of Fatima at Koom, in Persia, afford an asylum which is rarely violated. Superstitious veneration, indeed, so guards these places that a refugee can be taken only by starving him out.‡ In Abyssinia there are five churches whose precincts are legal places of refuge.§

It must not be supposed that the royal authority is so complete as wholly to control every branch of the administration. The patriarchal idea always implies a slight admixture of the popular element. The Hebrews had two councils; the one, composed of twenty-three members, was found in every city, and its jurisdiction extended to the limits of the city lands. The Sanhedrim, or Great Council of Seventy-two, ruled over the whole nation.‖ In like manner, at the present day, the affairs of every city are under the control of its own council (mejlis), presided over by the governor, and composed of the cadi, or judge; the mufti, or law-expounder; the representatives of the Muslim, Christian, and Jewish portions of the community, chosen by the people, and some of the principal citizens appointed by the crown. The Grand Council, or Divan, sits at the capital under the presidency of the grand vizier, and is composed of the chief officers of state, and clergy, and of eminent and influential citizens. These control all the affairs of the country.

There is nothing in the East like the political or religious espionage which has often constituted the worst feature of des-

* Numb. xxxv., 15, 24, 25, 27.
† 1 Kings ii., 28.
‡ "Haji Baba," vol. i., p. 253
§ Krapf, p. 365, note.
‖ Prideaux, vol. iv., p. 113.

potic governments in the West. The only spy is the sovereign himself, who, like the celebrated Haroon Al Rashid, caliph of Bagdad, often in disguise, walks about the streets, discovering abuses which he sometimes punishes on the spot.* No one ever suffers for any treasonable speeches he may utter; and it must be considered both a relief under oppression and wrong, and a safety-valve, to be allowed to complain to one's heart's content. The police is very active and efficient; it, indeed, generally carries things with too high a hand.†

* Prideaux, vol. iv., p. 317; "Arabian Nights," p. 34.
† Churchill, "Lebanon," vol. iii., p. 274.

CHAPTER X.

RELIGIOUS HOUSES AND MEN.

In no part of the world have mankind attached greater importance to religion than in Western Asia. Its influence has always pervaded every stage and condition of human life, and its votaries have been noted for their zeal, whether in the propagation of its tenets or in suffering for its defense. Anciently as now, religion and the state were inseparable; an offense against the one was a crime against the other. Every nation had its own gods,* and, now that all are comprised in one empire, the political status of each class of the people depends simply and solely upon its religious profession. To be an infidel (*din-siz*, without religion) is everywhere deemed the worst of crimes, and makes a man an outlaw.

It is an interesting fact that the religious systems which have exerted the widest influence in the world originated in Western Asia. Europe, Africa, and America have ever pointed to the East as the source of their faith, while Japan, China, and India describe theirs as coming from the West. It is not, however, our purpose to trace the origin or describe the development of these various systems; we shall only endeavor to point out such remains of the principal religious systems spoken of in the Scriptures as yet exist in Bible lands. These can not be numerous, for Christianity and Islam, supplanting all else, have, each in turn, sought to destroy the memory of the days of ignorance. We shall consider them, in the present chapter, chiefly with regard to the outer forms and aspects of religion, and afterward remark upon some of the ideas still prevalent on religious subjects in the lands of the Bible.

The earliest form of idolatry which prevailed upon the earth consisted in the worship of the heavenly bodies. Among an ignorant people dwelling under the clear sky of Chaldea,

* Isa. xxxvii., 10–13.

Mesopotamia, Canaan, and Egypt, this does not seem strange. The sun daily went forth "rejoicing as a strong man to run a race;"* his influence, everywhere paramount, gave life to nature, and produced the seasons; the moon shone upon the night, marked the months, and ruled over the weather and the productive powers of nature; even the stars moved steadily on, as though animated. It was natural to invest these heavenly bodies with intelligence, a will, and even with divine attributes. The next step was prayer and praise, which soon took the grosser form of worshiping the emblems of these imaginary deities. These emblems possessed an advantage over the former, for they could be had at all times, and might be kept in a temple, ready whenever wanted, and not hiding behind a cloud, or visible only in the night. The principal emblem of the sun was fire, itself a great boon to mankind. It was and still is worshiped; its most acceptable sacrifice among the ancients was a human being, particularly the tender flesh of an infant. Other emblems were also used. In Egypt most of the brute creation were worshiped, as representing attributes of their chief divinities.

This system, under many of its forms and degrees of development, is frequently alluded to in the Scriptures. The sun is Bel, Baal, and Baalim; the moon, Ashtaroth.† Are any remains of this primitive form of idolatry, in its various stages of development, still existing in Western Asia, or has so gross a superstition utterly perished before the light, not of philosophy, but of revelation?

The first relic of this kind which we shall mention consists of certain names, or words, floating about the country, which can have no other origin than the form of idolatry we have described. These words are not found among people of one nation alone, who might adopt them under a false impression, or connect them with a distorted tradition; they are met with among inimical and isolated tribes, spread out over great spaces of time. Such is the word Babel, or Babil, applied by universal consent to a city in Lower Mesopotamia, whether the story of the confusion of tongues and the dispersion of mankind be,

* Psa. xix., 5.

† Deut. iv., 19; xvii., 3; 1 Sam. vii., 3; 1 Kings xi., 5; xvi., 32; 2 Kings xxiii., 5; Job xxxi., 26.

in men's ideas, connected with it or not. The word has no meaning in the modern languages of the East, though the names given by the ancients were always significant, as the student of the Bible can not fail to notice. There is no doubt that the word Bel in the original language of Chaldea signified lord, and was given to the sun, the greatest and mightiest of all gods, to denote his supremacy over all created things. Now this word Bel, or Bal, or Baal has come down to us historically, both in the Bible and in profane Eastern writings, attached to various localities and men, and under many forms, without any explanation of its sense; this, however, the recent discoveries respecting the ancient language of Chaldea now enable us to expound. The Belshazzar of our Bible is the Hebrew pronunciation of Bil-shar-uzar, which means *Bel gives treasures*. Such is the origin of certain other names occurring in Scripture, as Beth-shemesh (the house of the sun); Ashtaroth-Karnaim (Venus with horns, or the new-moon). All names containing the syllable Bel, or Baal, are also indicative of this form of idolatry; just as the names in Arabic, which contain the word Allah, such as Khaïr-oollah, Abd-allah, etc., indicate the fact that the Arabs believe in and worship Allah. The Phœnicians also had the names Hanni-bal, Asdru-bal, etc.; and the Greeks Helio-polis (city of the sun), etc. These are all memorials of the ancient worship of the heavenly bodies. So are the ruins of many temples dedicated to them, the numerous statues erected to their honor, the inscriptions which mention their names, or implore their favor, and the medals, coins, and gems which bear their effigies.

But these are all the memorials of a dead faith. We have still in the East remnants of its living votaries, who cling to the rites of their fathers in spite of the persecutions and hatred of Muslim bigotry. We have already spoken of the Yezidies, mostly found on the borders of Koordistan, but who have hospitably entertained us in their tents as far west as the Gebl-shimon, near Aleppo. Their tenets are not fully known, for their books have not been studied; yet there is no doubt that, amidst a confused mass of notions derived from Christianity and Islam, they cover and hide the doctrines and practices of the ancient magi. The tomb of Sheikh Adi is the principal shrine, or tekkeh (place of worship), of this ancient

people. It lies in a sheltered valley amidst the mountains of Koordistan, and by the side of it gleams a white spire springing from a low edifice, neatly constructed, and, like all the chapels of the Yezidy, kept as pure as repeated coats of whitewash can make it. It is called the Sanctuary of Sheikh Shems, or the Sun, and is so built that the first rays of that luminary fall upon it. Near the door is carved on a slab an invocation to Sheikh Shems. Mr. Layard, describing his visit, says: "At sunset, as I sat in the alcove in front of the entrance, a herdsman led into a pen attached to the building a drove of white oxen. I asked a cawal (priest) who sat near me to whom the beasts belonged. 'They are dedicated,' he said, 'to Sheikh Shems, and are never slain except on great festivals, when their flesh is distributed among the poor.' On festive occasions lamps are lighted and set all about the grounds, in niches of the walls, on isolated rocks, and even in the hollow trunks of trees, and men and women pass their right hands through the flame,* and, after rubbing the right eyebrow with the part which had been purified by the sacred element, they devoutly carry it to their lips. Some who bore children in their arms anointed them in like manner, while others held out their hands to be touched by those who, less fortunate than themselves, could not reach the flame. Their veneration for the sacred fire is such that they kiss even the stones which have been blackened by the smoke of the lamps. They also kiss the object on which fall the first rays of the sun. They have nearly the same reverence for fire, as symbolic; they never spit into it, but frequently pass their hands through the flames, kiss them, and rub them over their right eyebrow, or sometimes over their whole face." The blue color is an abomination to them, as it was anciently to the Sabeans, and they never wear it. They worship toward the east, or rising sun. They are fond of wearing white clothes, which is always done by their priests or sheikhs, and practice frequent ablutions and great cleanliness.†

But there is another class of people in the East who strongly remind us of the religious rites of the ancient Persians, and hence go by the name of Parsees (Persians). They worship

* Jer. xxxii., 35.

† Layard, vol. i., p. 239.

toward fire, and especially toward the sun, as being the abodes and emblems of the deity. As we have already seen, this is one of the oldest forms of idolatry. But it was arranged in a complete system by Zoroaster, who lived about the time of the Jewish captivity in Babylon.* The value of fire to man may have been one motive for its worship, but the chief cause probably lay in the fact of its first being obtained from the sky, implying to the superstitious mind a divine origin. At Athens such a fire was kept with religious care, it being thought that the very existence of the state depended upon its never going out. Every new colony carried some of this sacred fire with it, and kept it in its prytaneum, or council hall.† Among the Romans the sacred fire was kept burning day and night, by virgins of the noblest families, in the beautiful little temple of Vesta, yet standing amidst the ruins of the Imperial City. The favorite emblem of the Aryans is thought to have been a peculiar cross  representing the two sticks with which fire used to be produced; but it often occurs on the Cyprian remains in the Cesnola collection.

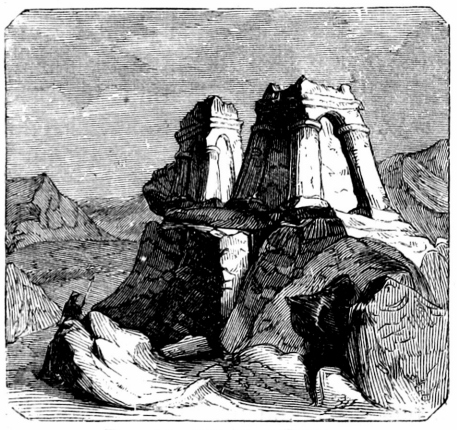
It is interesting to study the gradual process by which Providence put an end to the various forms of idolatry that once exerted so great an influence upon the minds of men. This is particularly striking in the case of fire-worship. It was not an Egyptian superstition, but was found prevalent by the Hebrews in the land of Canaan, whose inhabitants worshiped Baal, Ashtaroth, and all the host of heaven, and whose veneration for fire was so great that they caused their children to pass through it, and even burned them alive as an offering to Moloch.‡ The first blow struck, by anticipation, at this superstition consisted in the visible sending of fire from heaven by Jehovah himself in sight of all the people, upon the altar of sacrifice in the wilderness; thus proving the element worshiped by the heathen to be the servant of the God of the Hebrews.§ This very fire was kept unextinguished for five hundred years, and was used for the sacrifices of the tabernacle at

* For the tenets of Zoroaster and the Zendavesta, see Prideaux, vol. i., p. 386. See also Max Muller, "Chips," vol. i., etc.

† Rawlinson, "Herodotus," vol. i., p. 289, note.

‡ Lev. xx., 2–4; 2 Kings iii., 27. § Lev. ix., 24.

Shiloh.* When the Temple was dedicated by Solomon, God again sent down fire from heaven upon the new altar of sacrifice;† and this fire seems to have been preserved until the destruction of the Temple, and the Babylonian captivity. But the greatest blow to the superstitious veneration for fire, which had become prevalent even among the Israelites, was struck by Elijah the prophet, in the days of Ahab. The people were bidden to choose between Jehovah and Baal, and the test of real divinity was made to consist in the power to bring down fire from heaven. The "Fire-god" was, of course, unable to produce the test; and when the flame descended upon the altar in answer to the prayer of Elijah, the people fell upon their faces, and cried, "The Lord he is the God" (Hebrew, "*Jehovah* he is the God.") This event proved the death-blow to fire-worship in Israel; for, though the chariot and horses dedicated to the sun at Jerusalem were not burned until nearly three hundred years later, yet this form of idolatry was so far vanquished that it did not re-appear after the captivity.‡



Fire-altar at Nakhshi-Rustam.

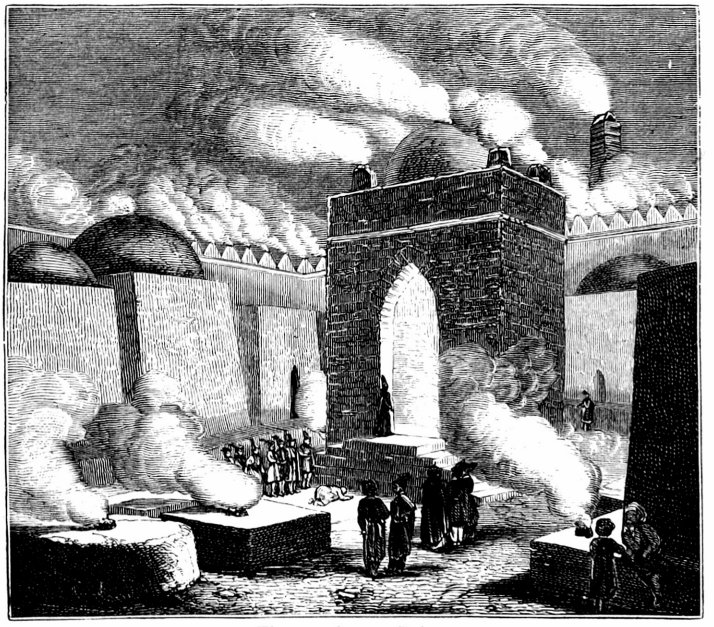
The religion of Zoroaster was at one time the national faith of the Persians, of Xerxes, and of Darius, who was vanquished by Alexander the Great. Some of the fire-altars erected by these kings are still extant, in a good state of preservation, as may be seen in the above illustration. Many rock sculptures also represent the worship of the element by kings and priests, and long inscriptions, in arrow-headed characters, contain addresses to Ormazd (the good principle), who was worshiped under the emblem of fire.

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* Lev. vi., 13; x., 1. † 2 Chron. vii., 1.

‡ 2 Kings xxiii., 11; Prideaux, vol. i., p. 392.

The Parsees are now chiefly found in Central and Eastern Persia. They number about ten thousand in Kerman, while four hundred families reside in Yezd, where they have one of their principal fire-temples, or atesh-jah.* There are at Ooroomia, the birth-place of Zoroaster, two lofty mounds, which are supposed by some to have been Parsee altars;† but remains of human beings and sarcophagi have been found in them, rendering it probable that, like most similar mounds in the East, they were built as monuments of the dead. A most



Fire-temple near Bakoo.

remarkable fire-temple, however, is yet standing near the western shore of the Caspian Sea, twelve miles from Bakoo, and at the eastern extremity of the Caucasian range. It is built upon a hill, whose soil is saturated with naphtha, which oozes out everywhere in the form of gas. The temple consists of a small building erected on a platform, with three steps supporting four square pillars bearing a dome. The pillars are hollow, and there are holes in various parts of the premises

* Tavernier, p. 167.

† Perkins, p. 275.

through which the gas escapes, and, being lighted, burns with a steady flame. Around the temple is an open court with cells for pilgrims, each of which is provided with a jet, which burns night and day. Here vast numbers of devotees used to congregate from Persia and India for the purpose of cleansing their sins in the holy flame; some, indeed, remained to end their days upon the sacred spot; but the number of votaries has greatly diminished of late, a result apparently produced by perfect toleration. The worship of this fire consists in prostrations before the altar, singing alternately a monotonous chant, and beating cymbals to mark the time. After these ceremonies they eat some sugar-candy. It is believed that the original temple upon this spot was built by Zoroaster (Zerdusht) himself. The present is evidently a modern structure.*

Nor did this superstition prevail among the great nations of antiquity alone, where it was reduced to a philosophical system; it may even now be found among less cultivated people who, to this day, venerate the host of heaven. This was once the case with the aborigines of Europe, and is still true of the heathen Circassians in the Caucasus, as well as of the Gallas in Eastern Africa. The Circassians believe in one great spirit—Thka, whom they appear to confound with the sun, called Tgka, which sounds nearly the same. They hold thunder and lightning in great veneration, and to be killed by the latter is considered a great privilege. When such an event occurs, the dead body is consigned to the earth with great solemnity, and the bereaved family rejoice at the honor thus conferred upon them. In another respect, also, they remind us of the forms of idolatry forbidden to the Hebrews.† They celebrate their religious ceremonies exclusively in sacred groves, where an emblem, shaped like a cross, is carefully preserved. When a warrior returns home victorious, or has escaped some impending calamity, he repairs to the grove, and presents a thank-offering to the god. These offerings are of all kinds, and are suspended from the branches of the trees, together with garlands of flowers; they are never touched, except in war by a hostile tribe, who have the right to carry them off as plunder. Animals are also here offered in sacrifice.

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* Ussher, p. 206–209.

† 2 Chron. xxxiv., 3; Micah v., 14.

Bruce relates that the Gallas of Eastern Africa worship certain stars in the heavens in particular positions. He also states that they worship the wanzey (tree), under which they crown their kings.* Krapf's language, however, is this: "A higher spirit is supposed to dwell within the tree, on which account it is esteemed holy, and no one dare fell it, or harm it without losing his life. They there pray, not to the tree, but to their highest deity, Waka, sacrificing oxen and sheep to him, and drinking plenty of beer and smoking tobacco."† This veneration for large and ancient trees, which sometimes becomes positive idolatry, is also found among some of the rural tribes of Western Asia, being particularly common among the Koords in their mountain fastnesses. The latter perform certain rites around these trees, whose nature we have not been able to ascertain, owing to their fear of detection, and the danger attached to the suspicion of idolatry. Many of these trees are supposed to be endowed with miraculous influence, and rags tied to their branches are thought, after a while, to imbibe a healing power. Large trees are usually selected. But we have sometimes traveled many hours and days in destitute regions, and coming suddenly upon a small bush, standing alone in the wilderness, have found it completely covered with these tokens of veneration.

The worship of sacred trees was also practiced by the Assyrians, as seen upon the slabs of Nineveh. The tree appears to have been a species of pine, fir, or cedar, whose cones were held during worship.

The apostle Paul, arguing with the Christians at Corinth respecting sacrifices made to idols, declares that they are made to *devils*.‡ Some have thought this judgment harsh and uncharitable. It is a curious fact, however, that we have an illustration of this Biblical view of the matter among a people addicted not to the grossest kind of idolatry, like the people of Greece or India, but to the more refined worship of the sun and of fire. We have already spoken of the Yezidies and of their Sabean doctrines. They are also characterized by peculiar ideas respecting *Sheitan* (Satan), whom they fear, and seek

* Bruce, vol. ii., p. 407. This practice also existed among the Romans.—Anthon, "Classical Dictionary;" see *Oscillum*, and wood-cut.

† Krapf, "Travels, etc.," p. 64.

‡ 1 Cor. x., 20.

to propitiate. So anxious are they not to offend him by "taking his name in vain," that they never pronounce it, any more than the Jews do the name of Jehovah; and to utter it in their presence is an insult they deeply resent. They as carefully avoid the word "accursed," *lanet*, and every word which resembles these two. For instance, they never call a river *shat*, for it resembles *sheitan;* but they call it *nahr*. For the same reason, they never say *kaïtan*, a cord; nor do they use the words *nal*, a horse-shoe, or *nalbant*, a farrier, because they sound like *lan*, curse; *maloon*, accursed.* These facts are known by all who have any intercourse with them. Neither are they accused of having any idols, nor of worshiping the devil, any more than is implied in the foregoing statements. Yet this has sufficed to fasten upon them the name of Worshipers of the Devil, by which they are generally known. Indeed, one of their towns on the south-eastern side of the plain of Ooroomia is called by all but themselves Sheitan-abad (City of the Devil).† They are also accused of worshiping serpents, but there does not appear to be sufficient proof of this, though the figure of a snake is one of the emblems around the door of the sanctuary of Sheikh Adi.‡ We have seen them deal with snakes, tossing them like a sling, and throwing them out of their way: they assured us they killed the venomous kinds, but thought it wrong to injure those that are harmless. The modern Greeks venerate any serpent found in a vineyard, deeming it the guardian of the place, feeding it, and allowing no injury to be done to it—a superstition they have inherited from their fathers; but they kill serpents when found anywhere else. Pococke describes a visit to a spot in Egypt where sacrifices were offered to a snake in order to obtain the cure of diseases. But he does not appear to be fully satisfied that there is any thing like snake-worship in the East, or that there remains any thing of that adoration of dumb creatures which was once universal among the Egyptians.§

There is no doubt, however, that not only the worship of the host of heaven and that of animals, birds, and creeping things, was prevalent anciently in many of the lands of the

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* Layard, vol. i., p. 245.
† Perkins, p. 190.
‡ Ussher, p. 409.
§ Pococke, vol. i., p. 125.

Bible, but the veneration of carved and molten images was common even among the Israelites. They made and worshiped, as we know, a molten calf under the very brow of Sinai, and again at Bethel and Dan on the disruption of the Hebrew kingdom.* History also informs us that this superstitious veneration for images was universal among the surrounding nations. The change in this matter seems almost incredible. But there are yet sufficient remains of the old state of things to prove the correctness of history; and to these we must for a moment call the reader's attention.

There are numberless ruins scattered all over the country, many of them indicating the most lavish expenditure of treasure, and displaying wonderful taste and genius. But it is worthy of notice that by far the greater number of these monuments of antiquity are idol temples. A few citadels and city walls are yet standing, and here and there a theatre or a circus, built by the Greeks or the Romans—very un-Oriental. There are many tombs, some of them of huge proportions or of fine workmanship; but the most beautiful and expensive structures are usually the temples of heathen gods. Many statues have also been found of stone or metal, and of these a large proportion are idols. This is a significant fact; for the early Christians were iconoclasts (image-breakers), while the Muslims, to this day, can never see any statue, which they consider an idol, without endeavoring to mutilate it.

But the heathen were not satisfied with worshiping the gods in the temples; they had also their images in their houses, and paid homage to them at home, as we there pray to the only true God. The family of Laban, though they worshiped Jehovah, kept these household gods, and set so much by them that when Rachel was leaving home never to return, knowing that her father would not willingly part with them, she stole the images and carried them away. Laban appears to have been more grieved at the loss of his idols than of his children.† Jacob dared not destroy them, but simply buried them in the ground.‡ Such images are occasionally met with among ruins buried in the earth, in the tombs of the dead, or, more common-

* Exod. xxxii., 1-6; 1 Kings xii., 28, 29.
† Gen. xxxi., 19-30.
‡ Gen. xxxv., 4.

ly still, in the dunghills of ancient towns.* They are often of brass, but sometimes of more valuable materials, like the silver shrines of Diana at Ephesus, which gave employment to a large number of people in that city, and have probably all been melted down by this time.† The small images now found appear to be copies of larger statues, probably kept in the principal temples. We give a drawing of one found in Palestine; it is of brass, of rude workmanship, and apparently of great age. It represents Ashtaroth, or Astarte, the Venus of the Greeks. Those of finest workmanship are found among the ruins of the ancient Greek cities in Asia Minor. They are commonly made of clay, baked in the sun, and sometimes colored red. Some of them show the remains of gilding with which they were once covered. They chiefly represent the well-known gods and goddesses of the Greeks. The illustration given below is the head of a beardless Jupiter, probably a copy of the Coryphean, the remains of whose temple are yet seen on the summit of Mount Pagus at Smyrna. The image was found among the ruins of the ancient city. The work is fine, and the figure was probably first cast in a mould and then finished. We also reproduce, on the following page, a terra-cotta image of Boodh, dating about 200 B.C., and found in the same place, showing that Boodhism, which originated in the valley of the Ganges, in the fifth century B.C., was not unknown to the Greeks soon after the age of Alexander.



Bronze Ashtaroth. (1 Sam. xxxi., 10.)



Jupiter Corypheau, Smyrna. Ancient Terra Cotta.

Among the many coins found in ruined cities, some bear the representation of the principal idol worshiped in the place, so that when the words are obliterated those who are familiar with these matters are able to tell the place where the coin was struck simply by the effigy upon it.

* Isa. ii., 20

† Acts xix., 24.

Such, for instance, are many coins of Ephesus, which bear the well-known image of Diana.* She is there represented under a peculiar form as the providence and nurse of the beasts of the field. But she is also pictured as a huntress, and was worshiped under the form of a hind.



Terra-cotta Statue of Boodh. Discovered in an ancient Tomb at Smyrna.

The Bible student may have noticed the peculiar wording of a passage referred to above: "They" (the household) "gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their ear-rings which were in their ears."† This language implies that the ear-rings bore images of the heathen gods, for Jacob had asked them to put away their strange gods, and they complied by giving up certain ornaments, all of one kind, not nose-rings, bracelets, necklaces, or ankle-rings, but *ear*-rings alone. This statement agrees with facts. Many ancient gold ear-rings bear the figure of Cupid. The Greeks were particularly fond of them. Our illustration is copied from a gold ear-ring found in the neighborhood of Padan-aram; it represents Cupid laughing and holding his sides. Gems are also not unfrequently found with the images of some deity carved upon them. Most of these were probably used as signet-rings, and worn, as now, by men on the finger. In Assyria and Mesopotamia these seals were often in the shape of cylinders, and to this day the women of that country wear them, strung with other trinkets from their ears, hanging down to their shoulders. Thus the images of the gods of Babylon and Nineveh adorn the persons of Muslim women, who belong to the most iconoclastic people on the face of the earth.



Ear-ring, with Cupid. (Gen. xxxv., 4.)

But the question remains, has the worship of idols, or images made with men's hands, entirely passed away, and are the relics above described—broken statues, coins, gems—the only remaining mementos of idolatry? In a word, is nothing of it left in the hearts of the people?

* Acts xix., 35.

† Gen. xxxv., 4.

We have seen that idolatry began with the host of heaven, but it did not stop there. When we examine the ancient mythologies, we find that the majority of the gods and goddesses were once human beings, like their worshipers. Boodh was a heathen Mohammed, who set up the capital of his religious empire in India, and is now worshiped from Thibet to China and Japan; the Jupiter of the Greeks was originally a king of Crete; and Asshur, the chief deity of the Assyrians, was the founder of Nineveh.* The veneration which men feel toward their ancestors is enhanced when these are also the founders of their states. This, as already shown, is peculiarly the case where princes have sought to produce the impression that they belonged to a divine race by keeping out of sight of their subjects, and rendering themselves invisible, like the Deity. Hero-worship has also often led to idolatry.

In the West the images of the emperors were carried about in the armies and set up in the cities, to be worshiped by their subjects, refusal to do this being deemed equivalent to high treason. It is not strange, therefore, to discover the same tendency among their descendants, who, after casting away the images of the great men of heathen times, have set up the pictures of those of a later period, viz., Christian saints and martyrs, and have worshiped them, offering sweet incense, burning lamps, and calling upon them for help. They, indeed, disclaim the worship of the image itself, and so did their heathen ancestors. Like them, they solemnly consecrate the images before making any religious use of them: they bow down, pray to, and kiss them.† They believe in the varied efficacy of different images, and in the miraculous power of some, as well as acknowledge the want of likeness between the picture and the being it represents. Modern (Christian) idolaters point out the fact that they use painting alone, and not statuary, as an apology for their practice.‡ But even this doubtful superiority can not be claimed by the Church of Rome.

* Gen. x., 11.

† 1 Kings xix., 18.

‡ Oriental Christians believe that *painted images* are nowhere forbidden in the Bible, but only those that are *carved*. Our version of Lev. xxvi., 1, does not fully give the idea of the original, which covers every possible form—"graven image" being a bass-relief, like the Assyrian, Greek, and Egyptian sculptures—the "standing image," or statue—and *the image of stone*, a painted stone, the only material then used for painting.—PRIDEAUX, vol. iii., p. 250, note.

The use of images was not established in the Eastern Churches without long and often-renewed struggles, but it is now everywhere practiced except in the Nestorian, or Chaldean, Church. And the system is as fully carried out with the former as it was by their heathen progenitors, who are said to have had thirty thousand gods.* Every person, church, town, or spring of water has a tutelary saint, who performs the part of a guardian.† The attributes and powers of the Virgin Mary, the Panaghia (the all-holy) of the Greeks, and the Sit (lady) of the Arabic-speaking peoples, are, in the minds of her votaries, as great and as varied as those of Venus, or Ashtaroth; for there is the Panaghia of the rich, that of the poor, and one suited to meet every different ailment. Even highway robbers have their Κρὺφη Παναγία (the secret virgin), to whom they promise a part of their booty if she will only vouchsafe to aid them in the perpetration of their crimes.

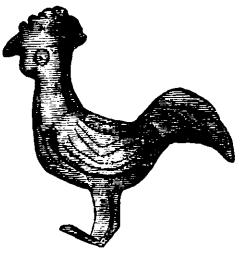
The image-worship of Oriental Christians is, therefore, a remnant of the ancient idolatry of Western Asia. It is a revival of the latter under a specious but unimportant change of form. This is so well understood in the East that it has always been prominently brought forward by the propagators of Islam, and is probably one of the principal reasons of their success. But there are still more distinct remains of the ancient idolatry, which is now practiced in secret, because involving all participants in the penalty of death. Such are the peculiar rites of the Yezidies and of the heathen Koords. We have already spoken of the tenets of the former, and of the facts ascertained by Mr. Layard, during a visit to the tomb of Sheikh Adi. On another point he says, "When they speak of the devil they do so with reverence, as Melek Taoos (King Peacock,) or Melek el Koot (the mighty angel). Sheikh Nasr distinctly admitted that they possess a bronze or copper figure of a bird, which, however, he was careful in explaining was only looked upon as a symbol, and not as an idol. This always remains with the great sheikh, and is carried with him wherever he may journey. When deputies are sent to any distance to collect money for the support of the tomb and priests, they are furnished with a small image of it (I understood the sheikh

* Gillies, "Greece," vol. i., chap. ii.

† 2 Kings xvii., 26, 27.

to say made in wax), which is shown to those among whom they go, as an authority for their mission. This symbol is called Melek Taoos, and is held in great reverence. Much doubt has prevailed among travelers as to its existence, but Sheikh Nasr, when I had opportunity of speaking to him in private, so frankly admitted it that I consider the question as completely set at rest."*

There are also other tribes who hold to this same Melek Taoos, but they are not "worshipers of the devil," nor do they believe in Parsee dualism. They are the heathen Koords and Turkmens, who appear to believe in a sort of Pantheism, and the transmigration of souls. As one of them expressed it, "When a man dies, his soul, which is like a small fly, goes into some creature, where he suffers the punishment of his sins; the soul of a pasha, for instance, goes into the body of a donkey, which is ill used, and beaten almost to death." We have known a woman from among these people who was converted to Christianity and baptized. She spoke of their secret night-meetings and orgies, on account of which she had renounced their tenets. We understood from her that the Melek Taoos was there set up and worshiped; that a cock was killed as a sacrifice to it; that wine was drunk in abundance by all present; and that this was followed by orgies in the dark rivaling the worst bacchanalian performances. The accompanying illustration is a faithful copy of one of the curious images worshiped both by the Koords and the Yezidies, which play so important a part in this ancient and almost effete superstition. It is made of brass, rudely carved, and has never before, we believe, been given to the public.

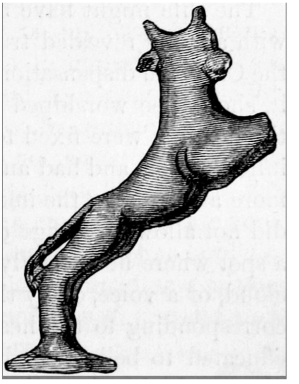


Koordish bronze Cock.

The Druses of Mount Lebanon, Anti-Lebanon, and the Hauran possess a brazen image of a similar character. It is the fig-

* Layard, "Nineveh," vol. i., p. 246. We give only such facts about the Yezidies as are generally stated by the natives, both members of that sect and others. It is difficult to discover the whole truth, where so powerful a motive exists for concealing it. The statements contained in the interesting memoirs of the American missionary, Dr. Lobdell, are too contradictory to throw any reliable light upon this subject.

ure of a calf, upon which they insist that they look with indifference, and claim that they preserve it simply as a caricature of their first teacher, El Dorazi, who lived eight hundred years ago, after whom they are called Druses, and whom they hold in derision as inferior to Hamzi, another of their teachers. It is well known, however, that there are no greater liars in the world than the Druses, and that their books enjoin secrecy respecting their tenets. The motive by which they claim to be actuated in making and keeping these images is quite insufficient. It is highly probable that the golden calf, having been long worshiped in Upper Palestine, brazen copies of it have from time to time been found among the ruins of the country, and these have gradually come to be regarded with superstitious reverence, or employed in some such manner as are the images of the Melek Taoos among the Yezidies. The form and attitude of this calf are more artistic than any Arab could conceive or execute, and the bronze is very old; at least such is the case with the only specimen we have ever seen, and which we here reproduce.*



Druse Calf, of Bronze. (1 Kings xii., 28.)

We now proceed from the consideration of the object of religious worship to that of the places where it is publicly celebrated: to the temple, the synagogue, the church, and the mosk.

Much has been written on the form and dimensions of the tabernacle erected by Moses, and of its successor, the Temple of Jerusalem. Many drawings and plans have been published, and the subject may be deemed quite exhausted. Instead of entering, therefore, upon any further inquiry, we shall confine ourselves to a more general view, and point out such illustrations as are afforded by the modern East.

No careful student of the Bible can have failed to notice that Divine Providence has, from the beginning, been engaged in imparting a moral and religious education to the human

* Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," p. 388, note 3; Newbold, "Jour. As. Soc.," vol. xii., p. 27; Churchill, "Lebanon," vol. ii., p. 105; Clarke, "Travels," p. 279.

race through the portion of it which we call the Hebrew nation; and every step in the process is characterized by wonderful wisdom and skill. God has always started from some heathen stand-point, and has worked up thence toward the development and the establishment of new truths. We have already called attention to the use made of fire descending from heaven to destroy the worship of the heavenly bodies and of fire. Let us now point out another particular of this process which has reference to the *place* of worship.

The rule might have been laid down at Sinai, in accordance with already revealed truth, and as more fully required under the Christian dispensation, that God, being an omnipresent Spirit, should be worshiped everywhere alike. But the gods of the heathen were fixed to one spot. Even the sun has its definite location, and had an earthly image; and the ignorant were more attracted by the image than by the orb of day itself. God did not allow an image of himself to be made, but he selected a spot where he specially abode, and showed his presence by a cloud, or a voice, or by the answer of the Urim and Thummim, corresponding to the heathen oracles. As the people became educated to believe and to realize his spiritual existence, he dispensed with the holy place, and destroyed it. The process was gradual and slow. The heathen gods were numerous, and had many temples, while Jehovah, in order to impress his unity on the mind of the world, allowed but *one* Temple to be built for his worship, and there manifested his glory.

The heathen temple was not a place of meeting for the people. It was the house of their god.* There the god dwelt, and the priests alone went in to him, while the people stood and worshiped outside. These temples were generally small, but the door was large, so that the idol could be seen by the crowd without, where the altar and sacrifice stood in front of the door.† The interior of the building was simple, and contained little beside the idol and the ex-votos, or gifts, of the votaries hung round upon the walls; but the exterior was wrought of the finest materials, and often extremely elaborate. It is now found that the most celebrated temples of Greece were gilded outwardly, so that their splendor shone far, and their worship-

* 1 Sam. v., 2; 2 Kings x., 21, 27. † Gell, "Pompeïana," vol. i., p. 71.

ers, catching the distant sight, bent the knee toward the sanctuary. They were, moreover, built upon prominent hills, where they could be seen from a great distance. The Temple of Minerva, in Athens, stands on the top of the hill of the Acropolis, which rises from a level plain, and has sides too steep to be ascended except in one place. Where the whole country was level, as in Egypt and in the plains of Assyria, an artificial mound was built as a foundation for the temple. The celebrated temples of Baalbek are built upon such a mound, resting upon arches or vaults, some of whose stones are found to be sixty or seventy feet in length. All these particulars are met with in the Temple at Jerusalem, which, though but an imitation of the Mosaic tabernacle, reveals most clearly the ideal of a heathen sanctuary. The site chosen was high, steep, and inaccessible on three sides—the east, south, and west; and the inequalities of the ground were filled up with walls, vaulted passages, and cisterns. The Temple itself was small, being but forty cubits, or sixty feet, in length, and half as wide and high, though the small rooms built around and over it must have made it seem larger. It was covered, both within and without, not with gilding alone, like the Grecian temples, but with plates of solid gold, so that it shone with dazzling brightness when struck by the sun's rays.* The altar of sacrifice stood on the outside, before the door, and the congregation worshiped in the open court around, or under the shelter of the covered verandas, or porches supported by marble pillars. The space forming the courts was divided into distinct portions, to prevent confusion; this was also the case with some heathen temples; but the future purposes of the Divine Designer were foreshadowed by the circumstance that there was also a court for the Gentiles. The structures erected around the courts were comparatively low, for the "House of God" rose far above them, and was visible at a great distance. Every devout Jew prayed toward this sacred building as toward Jehovah's special habitation, his throne upon the earth.†

But time passed on, and Providence gradually unfolded the Divine plan. The Temple was utterly destroyed, not one stone remaining upon another. All the temples of the hea-

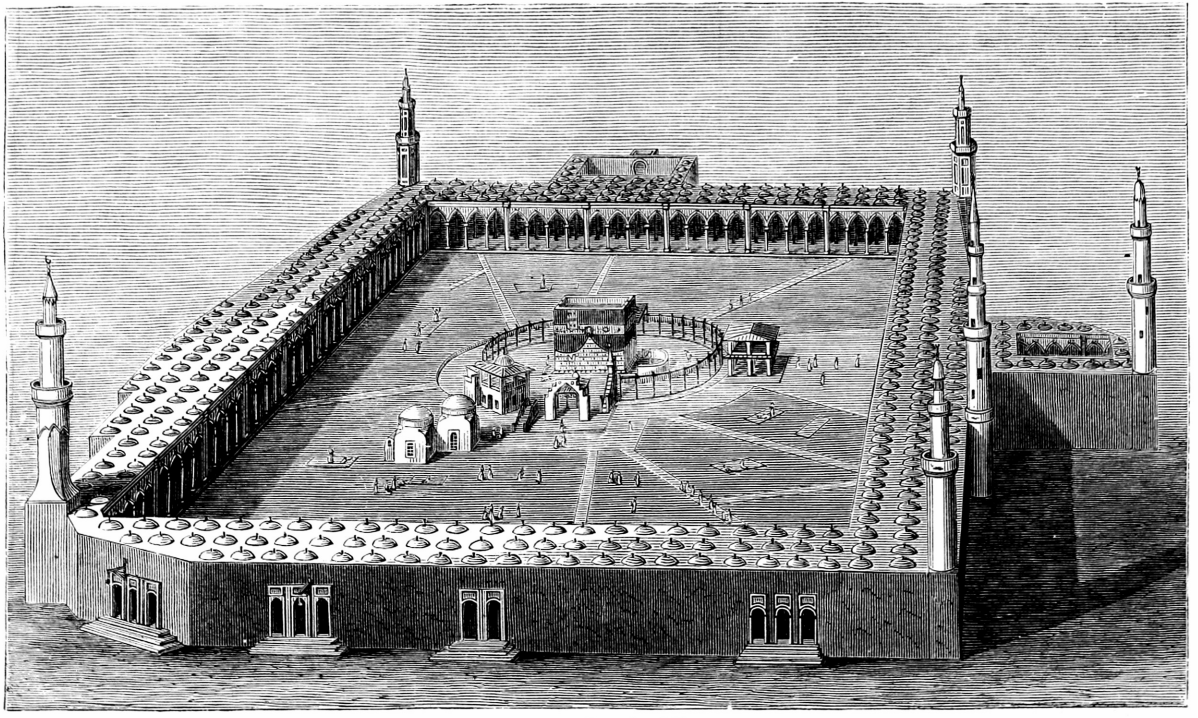
* 1 Kings vi., 21, 22; Josephus, "J. War," bk. v., c. v., § 6. † 1 Kings viii., 35.

then gods have perished with it, showing how thorough and radical was the remedy. But the same Providence has left enough to illustrate and explain the old state of things, and impress the lesson upon the mind of the world. Look, for instance, at some of the shrines of Muslim saints—temples we may call them—where dead men's bones are all but worshiped. They are small buildings, containing in the centre the tomb of the saint whose intercession is implored, and whose miraculous interposition is earnestly sought, by the votaries who crowd in the surrounding court, particularly on the saint's festival. The turbeh, or mausoleum, is often built at great expense. That of the Imam Hosein, at Kerbelah, where immense numbers of pilgrims gather every year, is a building of a square form, whose walls are covered with enameled tiles of white, blue, and gold, the masonry being nowhere visible. The centre of this brilliantly decorated structure is crowned by a gilded dome, and the people of Kerbelah assert that it is covered with thin plates of gold. Three lofty minarehs, whose galleries are also gilt, stand at the corners of the building. They, too, are covered over with enameled tiles, and with gaudy arabesques of extreme beauty and intricacy.*

But the modern building which gives us, in most respects, the clearest idea of the Jewish temple, not perhaps in its details but in its general character, is the famous Caaba of Mecca, a very ancient heathen temple,† claimed to have been built by Adam, in perfect imitation of one which stands right over it in heaven. Mohammed cleansed it of idolatry by simply removing and destroying the sixty idols it originally contained. It alone is called by the Muslims Beit Oollah (the House of God), all their mosks being simply "meeting-houses." We have seen many drawings of this building by native artists, for the Koran does not forbid the representation of inanimate objects. None of them, however, is superior to the one we now offer our readers, taken from Sale's translation of the Koran (London: W. Tegg & Co., 1857). The Caaba, or Temple itself, is even smaller than that erected by Solomon, for it is only forty-four feet in length instead of sixty, but the width and height are greater, being respectively thirty-five and forty

* Ussher, pp. 458.

† Diodorus, lib. iii., chap. xliv.



The Caaba, or Temple of Mecca.

feet, instead of thirty. The only entrance is by a door on the north side, which is opened but two or three times in the year, whose threshold is elevated about seven feet above the ground. To enter it a movable wooden staircase is rolled up to it, which is mounted on five large rollers of bronze, has hand-railings on each side, consists of ten steps, and is broad enough to admit four persons abreast. The door is coated with plates of silver, and fastened with a huge padlock of the same metal. It has several gilt ornaments, and upon the threshold are placed every night numerous small lighted wax-candles and perfuming pans, filled with musk, aloes-wood, and various other aromatics.*

The interior of the Caaba consists of a hall or room, whose floor is of fine marble, and the lower parts of whose walls are ornamented with inscriptions and arabesques. It is lighted by golden lamps, and its walls are draped with rose-colored silk lined with white, and covered with flowers embroidered in silver. The roof is flat, with a parapet and a golden spout to carry off the rain-water.

There is one feature in particular wherein the Caaba resembles the Hebrew tabernacle alone, and points out its original connection with a people dwelling in tents; it is the tôb, or covering of silk, which hangs outwardly over its four walls. This practice is very ancient. The drapery is renewed every year, being furnished by the sovereign of Turkey: it extends all round the building and from the top to the ground, but is looped up at certain distances, showing the lower part of the walls. Running along the middle of this curtain is a broad band, wrought in gold, and covered with inscriptions. This covering is now black, but was formerly either white or red.

Around the Caaba is a large court inclosed by galleries. It measures five hundred and thirty-six feet, by three hundred and fifty-eight. The galleries are covered with small domes of modern construction, and supported by about five hundred columns of different proportions and styles, twenty feet high, and some of them set upside down. There are six minarehs, one of which has three galleries; this suggests the query whether the pinnacle of the Temple† may not have been the

* Exod. xxvi., 35; xxx., 8. † Matt. iv., 5.

original of the Muslim minareh (literally, *column*). The Hebrews had no bells, yet they had regular hours for the morning and evening sacrifice, which must in some manner have been announced to the public; for the means of ascertaining the divisions of time were neither precise nor common in those days. The regular hours of prayer enjoined by Islam also seem to have been borrowed from the practice of devout Jews.* It is highly probable, therefore, that the verbal call to prayer now practiced in the East, among Christians and Muslims, has a Hebrew origin, though no record of its existence among that people has survived the troublous times of the Middle Ages.

The Muslims attach the same ideas of sacredness to the Caaba as the Jews did to the Temple at Jerusalem. They pray toward it, and make pilgrimages to it; and it is death for any but an orthodox Muslim (a Sunni) to enter its holy precincts, or even the surrounding territory.†

The comparison we have drawn between the Jewish temple and the Caaba is, indeed, defective in many respects. The former was surrounded by chambers,‡ one of which would even seem to have been built over the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies.§ We can not discover the resemblance claimed by some to exist between Solomon's Temple and the ruins of Persepolis; but rather a striking one between the latter and the "house of the forest of Lebanon." Still we believe that the Caaba offers the best general notion of the *ideal* of the Jewish temple. It may be called a rude imitation both of the tabernacle at Shiloh and of the Temple at Jerusalem.

The God of Israel allowed the erection of but one temple to his name. The sacrifices which, up to the time of its erection, might lawfully be offered on many sacred spots became restricted to the one altar at Jerusalem, and ceased even there when the great Sacrifice was consummated which fulfilled the purpose of all sacrifices.

By the side of the temple gradually rose the synagogue, distinctly traced to the period after the return from the captivity, but probably originally instituted in connection with the schools of the prophets, like the tekkehs of the modern der-

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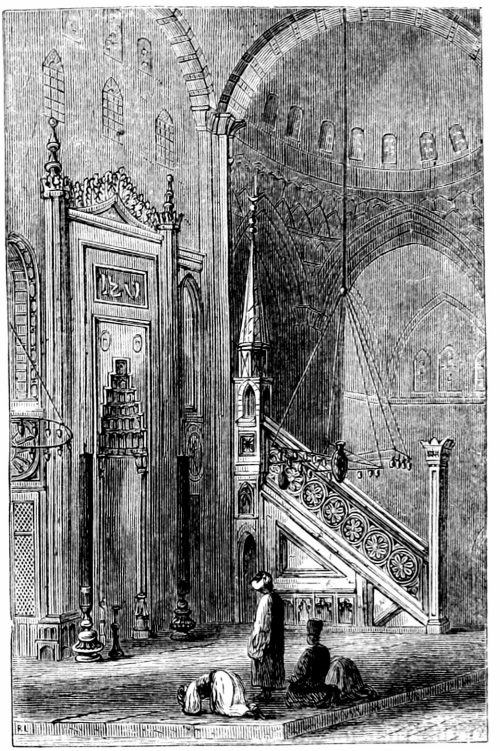
* Psa. lv., 17; Dan. vi., 10.

† Acts xxi., 28, 29.

‡ 1 Kings vi.; 2 Chron. iii.

§ 2 Chron. iii., 9; 2 Kings xxiii., 12.

vishes. It was a place of meeting for the purpose of reading the law and the prophets, and for prayer.* There was a mihrab, or alcove, toward which every face was turned, and this pointed to Jerusalem; in it was kept a chest containing a copy of the Scriptures, which were read every Sabbath-day,† as is still done among the Jews.



The Mihrab, Pulpit, and Candlestick in the Mosk.

The mosk of the Muslims offers, in some respects, a closer imitation of the Jewish synagogue than is presented by the Christian Church. They have the mihrab generally opposite the door of entrance, and always pointing toward Mecca, the kùbleh of the Muslim. Indeed, Mohammed originally chose Jerusalem as the place toward which his followers should pray, but soon after changed his mind, and substituted the Caaba. The same confusion of ideas presided at the erection of one of the oldest mosks built by the conqueror of Egypt at Fostat, its new capital; it was raised on the site of an old fire-temple of the Persians, and consisted of a small octagonal building in the centre of a court, surrounded by a gallery supported by several rows of pillars. It is said that the whole Koran was written upon its walls in letters of gold.‡ That this was not a mosk,

* Luke iv., 17. † Acts xiii., 27. ‡ Marcel, p. 21.

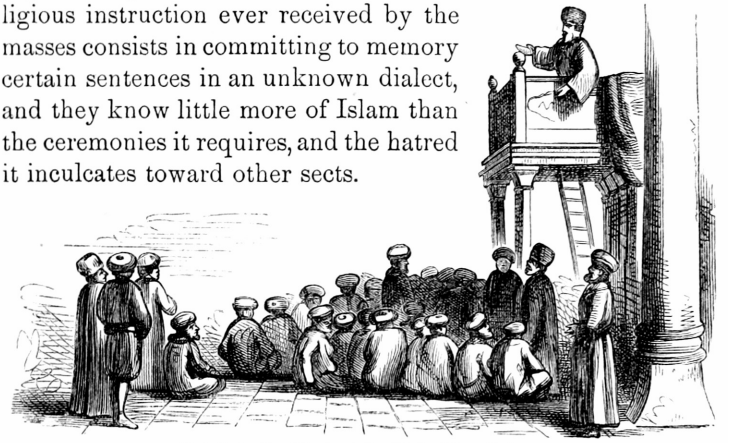
but a rival of the Mecca temple, soon became apparent; it could no more be tolerated by true Muslims than the temple built by Onias at Heliopolis, in Egypt, could be countenanced by the loyal Israelite;* hence it soon fell into disuse and ruin. Ever since mosks have been erected on the plan which still prevails. They are merely covered inclosures for prayer. Every man as he enters chooses the spot he prefers, and there offers his prayer by himself. This is done five times each day; but many prefer to say their prayers at home, or wherever they happen to be. On Friday, at 11 A.M., it is enjoined that a special prayer be offered, which lasts until 12 o'clock. Many neglect it altogether, and some merely lengthen their ordinary petitions. At the mosk it is customary for the faithful to arrange themselves in rows upon the floor. A leader repeats the appointed prayers and lessons aloud, and the rest participate by going through the genuflections and other motions in unison. There is no one at the desk, but all the worshipers keep together. There is neither singing nor preaching; but at the close a khojah (teacher) sometimes ascends the pulpit, and delivers a short exhortation to a handful of people squatted on the marble floor beneath. This is also done at other seasons. The usual form of the pulpit is extremely ill adapted to preaching, being rather intended as an ornament to the rich mosks, while the plainer ones dispense with it altogether.† It has not always been so, however. There have been times when speech was a great power in the mosk. Public lectures are also given from some pulpits at the chief mosks, which are attended mostly by the students of the medresehs, or colleges.

In some of these places, as, for instance, in St. Sophia, at Constantinople, the pulpit is a broad platform, with a railing around it. The khojah sits cross-legged, and holds a stick in his hand, a custom which points to the times when the Muslims were not undisputed masters of the land. The illustration on the opposite page represents the pulpit of the old Mosk of the Metuallies, at Cairo. It is built on the same principle as our own, but is ascended by a movable ladder. A copy of the

* Prideaux, vol. iii., p. 354.

† The pulpit in the Street of the Knights at Rhodes was of the same pattern.

Koran is usually kept in the mihrab, but it is never read as a part of the service. Lectures are given upon portions of it, but it is not, like our Bible, used to furnish a text for a sermon or popular exposition. Indeed, all the religious instruction ever received by the masses consists in committing to memory certain sentences in an unknown dialect, and they know little more of Islam than the ceremonies it requires, and the hatred it inculcates toward other sects.



Pulpit in the Mosk of the Metuallies, Cairo.

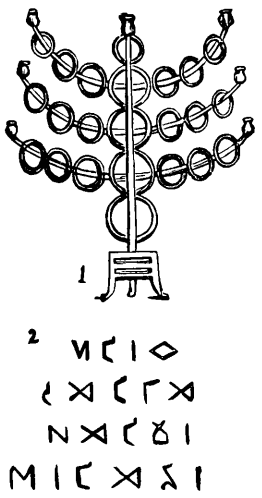
The plan of the mosk is simple and uniform. The ground is divided into two equal squares, one of which is occupied by the mosk itself, and the other by an inclosure in front of it, surrounded by a gallery, and containing a fountain for ablutions, usually in the centre of the court, but sometimes placed at one side, and connected with closets, which are an indispensable adjunct of every mosk. This fountain varies in design, the largest being covered with a dome, supported by columns. It corresponds to the molten sea of the Temple of Jerusalem, twelve cubits (eighteen feet) in diameter, borne by twelve oxen of brass, and holding nearly fifteen thousand gallons of water.* The Koran forbids images of living creatures, so that these fountains are ornamented only with arabesques and writing: they are called khazneh (reservoirs). The water flows through faucets set all around for the accommodation of the worshipers. Our illustration on page 723 represents the fountain of a mosk at Jaffa, which is the most common form throughout the country in the finest mosks.

The interior of the mosk is plain. Unlike the synagogue,

* 1 Kings vii., 23–26.

it has no benches or seats of any kind, and of course no aisles. The floor is covered with carpets or matting, and every worshiper takes off his shoes when he enters, and places them by his side when he kneels to pray. The mihrab, an ornamented alcove in the wall, contains a copy of the Koran, as that of the synagogue has one of the law. One or two massive candlesticks and the pulpit are the only other objects worthy of attention. There are also many little lamps, and some ostrich's eggs, hung in a circle from the ceiling; they are lighted during the fasting month of Ramazan, when the people go to the mosk in the night. But lights are kept burning every night at the caaba and at the tombs of saints, as was done in the tabernacle and the temple of the Jews.* Candlesticks are also frequently seen in mausoleums; these have but one stem, commonly bearing a massive wax-candle, and may be similar to those which were lighted on festivals in the Jewish temple.†

Nowhere have we met with any thing resembling the seven-branched candlestick of gold constructed in the Desert, and finally carried away to Babylon, the like of which was placed in Zerubbabel's temple, and taken to Rome, and is supposed to be figured on the Arch of Titus. The only thing we have seen in the East at all similar in form is a figure upon an antique gem, which we reproduce, very much enlarged. It was obtained at Ephesus, and contains on the obverse an inscription in some unknown tongue, whose characters bear a resemblance to those of Lycian inscriptions and coins.

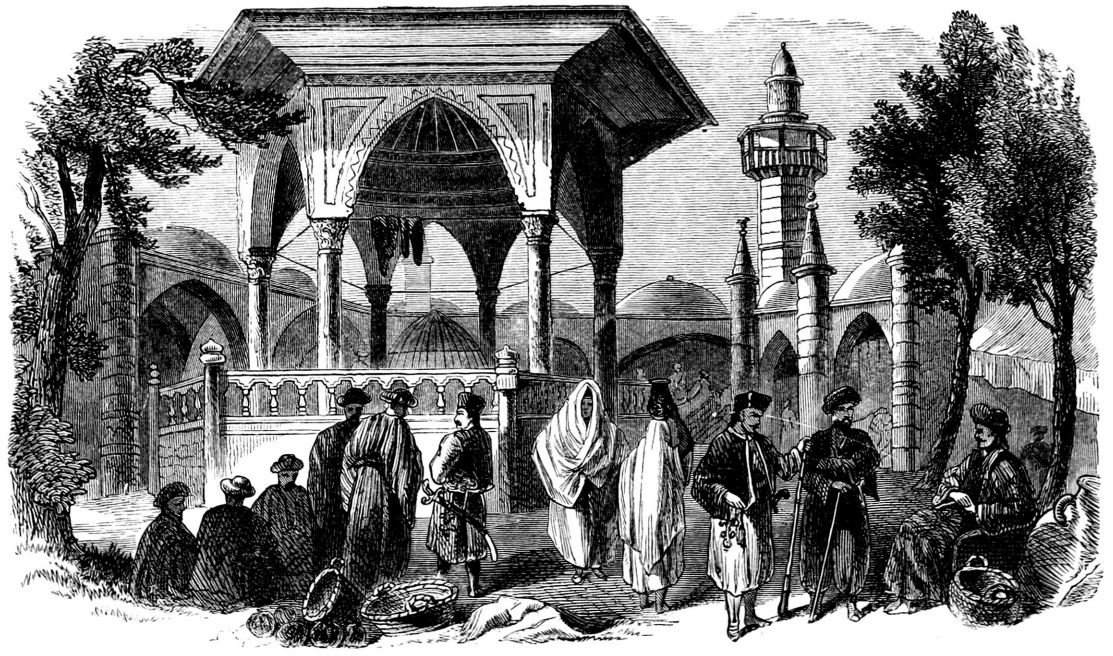


Candlestick. From a Gem found at Ephesus.

Besides the mosks, there are smaller places for prayer resorted to by Muslims, which might be called their chapels. They are small, built on no particular plan, and have no pulpit. Instead of a minareh, the acting muezzin stands upon a stone, or the top of the stairs, where he utters the call to

* Exod. xxvii., 20.

† Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," p. 420.



Mosk Fountain. (1 Kings i., 13.)

prayer. The tekkehs are the private chapels of various religious orders of dervishes, who there perform their services in unison.

The lavish expenditure of the Muslims upon the erection of their places of worship, particularly upon the mosks of Cairo and Constantinople, is an evidence of their religious zeal. This is apparent also from the vast number of the various religious structures we have described which are found in the principal cities of the empire, altogether beyond the necessities of the population. It is said that the number of mosks and chapels of all kinds in Broosa, once the capital of the empire, is equal to the number of days in the year, doubtless an Oriental hyperbole; but this is nothing in comparison with Cairo, where these buildings amount to no less than twenty-three thousand.* They are found even in the open country, and we have frequently seen by the roadside a beautiful stone structure, inclosed on three sides, covered over, and having a niche showing the direction of Mecca, where the traveler can rest and say his prayers. Instead of a building, however, a spot is sometimes set apart in the shade of a lofty tree, and surrounded by a low wall to prevent the intrusion of animals. Access within the inclosure is obtained by means of a stone step or two provided for the purpose. Such places existed among the Jews, and seem to have been called προσευχαι (places of prayer). It has been thought that our Lord continued all night in one of these;† and that such was the spot where, by the river-side, Paul preached at Philippi.‡ But we have repeatedly seen chapels in isolated spots on a river bank, where it must be delightful to worship God, and adore him in his works; and such may have been the place near Philippi, "where prayer was wont to be made."§ In times of drought or public calamity such places are sometimes resorted to for prayer by the whole population, led by the clergy of the various sects, and by the authorities, all of whom, for the time being, lay aside their religious animosities and bigotry.‖

We now turn to the houses of worship of Oriental Christians. It has been shown that the Jewish tabernacle and temple were

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* Thevenot, p. 129. † Luke vi., 12. ‡ Acts xvi., 13, 16.
§ Prideaux, vol. ii., p. 177. ‖ Pococke, vol. i., p. 36; Jonah iii., 8.

an imitation in principle of the buildings erected by the heathen to their idols; they were intended to prepare the way for the purer and more intelligent worship of the omnipresent Jehovah —"neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem"*—and to be then replaced by more appropriate structures. The steps in this development were as follows: first, the constant special manifestation of Jehovah's presence in one spot; second, prayer toward that spot; then, the synagogue with a Jerusalem kùbleh; and then, again, the Word of God put in the kùbleh, toward which prayer is offered; destruction of the Temple; and, finally, prayer toward heaven, the Christian kùbleh. Even Muslims, who never pray without a kùbleh, justify us when we tell them that we pray in any direction, because, as they themselves express it, "God everywhere is present and seeing." But Oriental Christians have not always understood this. During the time of ignorance, from which they are just emerging, there has been a constant struggle between the several principles through which the Church has been carried, *i. e.*, idolatry, the temple, the synagogue, and the purest Christian worship; and these are each and all expressed, with more or less distinctness, in the structure and the services of their churches and in their ecclesiastical systems.

Jerusalem is still the Jewish kùbleh, though no temple is there, nor any special manifestation of God's presence. That of the Muslims, as already stated, was the same at first, but was afterward changed to Mecca. The Yezidies, who, as we have seen, worship the sun and fire, turn in prayer toward the east, where the sun rises.† The Nestorians, who belong to the same race, also worship toward the east, and their churches, and those of some others of the oldest Christian sects, are built in the same direction, while the dead are buried with their faces looking that way.‡ What is the origin and ground of this practice? It is evident that it was not taken from the Jews, for the Temple was turned to the west, and those who presented their sacrifices upon the altar turned their backs to the east. This was probably enjoined on account of the sun-worship which then prevailed in Canaan. Orientals defend their practice by quoting Matt. xxiv., 27: "For as the light-

* John iv., 21. † Layard, vol. i., p. 241. ‡ Perkins, p. 186.

ning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." They deem worship toward the east an act of faith in the Lord's coming. Such a reason, however, would seem to be an apology for the practice rather than its foundation. It seems more probable that their use of the east as the kùbleh of their prayers, and the point toward which they build their churches and bury their dead, is a relic of the sun-worship of their ancestors; for these practices are chiefly found among Christians whose ancestors were addicted to this form of idolatry. This is surely a striking example of the tenacity with which the human mind clings to the early-planted seeds of error and superstition.

We scarcely need to allude to the lighting of candles and lamps in churches as being an imitation of the Jewish temple practice. The people, however, derived the custom from the candlesticks of the Apocalypse, whose real origin was doubtless the same.* The setting up of painted images within the church itself, the offering of prayers and incense to them, the bowing before them, devoutly kissing them, and giving them gifts, gold, and precious stones, finds its parallel in the history of the Jewish Church during the often recurring sway of idolatry. The golden calf was molten, set up, and worshiped at the very foot of Sinai; and while the mount trembled and shook at the presence of the Lord, the people shouted, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."† The court of the Temple at Jerusalem long contained the images of various gods that were worshiped, as in a Pantheon, together with Jehovah;‡ and in both cases the idolatry of the fathers clung to their children for many generations.

The Abyssinians, as might be expected from their connection with Judaism before the existence of synagogues, approach nearest to the Jewish temple in the internal arrangement of their churches. These buildings are circular, with a conical thatched roof, which projects eight feet beyond the walls, and forms a veranda, supported by wooden pillars. The centre of the church is occupied by a square, divided into

* Rev. i., 12, 13. † Exod. xxxii., 4.
‡ 2 Kings xxiii., 11; 2 Chron. xxxiii., 15; Ezek. viii., 11.

two equal parts by a vail or curtain, separating the holy place from the holy of holies. These two places can be entered only by the priests. The first inclosure, nearest to the square, is occupied only by the clergy, but the people sit or stand in the outer one after taking off their shoes. No one, however, can enter a church who is ceremonially unclean according to the definition of the Pentateuch.*

Among the Nestorians the elements of the Lord's Supper are kept in a small room at the inner end of the church, which can be entered by the clergy alone. In the Greek churches there is a high wooden screen, which cuts off one end of the church; it is called "iconostasis," from its being hung with the pictures of Christ, the Virgin, and many of the saints who mediate for the people (in the body of the church), with God (in the holy place). This screen has three doors. The two at the sides are alone used by the priests and the other servants of the church, to go in and out; the *central* door is, properly speaking, but a half-door, or a window, usually closed with a screen, which is drawn aside during mass, showing the altar within, and a copy of the Gospels lying open upon it. The portion behind the screen is called the holy sanctuary,† and is considered an imitation of the holy of holies. But it is also used as a sacristy.‡ With the Armenians the arrangements resemble more those of the Roman Church, the altar being in full sight, with an array of candlesticks, pictures, books, silver vessels, and flowers. A low balustrade runs along the front, separating it from the body of the church, except in the centre, where the deacon reads the Scriptures. Here, also, is placed the arm-chair of the bishop, the only pulpit ever used. He sits in state, with his mitre and cope on his head, and his sceptre in his hand, addressing his exhortation to the people without a text, and in a desultory, authoritative style.

It will be seen from these statements that the Oriental churches are a closer imitation of the Jewish tabernacle and temple than the mosks of the Muslim. This will be still more apparent if we call to mind that every church contains an

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* Exod. xix., 15; Numb. v., 2; Bruce, vol. iii., p. 643.

† Lev. iv., 6; 1 Kings vi., 16. ‡ Curzon, p. 250; Thevenot, p. 82.

altar, and upon that altar is offered the daily sacrifice of bread and wine, the body and blood of Christ typefied by the Jewish sacrifice of a lamb. It is needless to enter upon the question how far the doctrine of the Real Presence is received by the Oriental churches. We only point out the fact that they have endeavored to imitate at once the temple and the synagogue —the latter by making it a place of meeting for instruction and prayer, and the former by the introduction of much that is plainly derived from the Temple of Jerusalem, not even excepting a daily sacrifice.

Travelers have sometimes been struck with the small size of the outside door of the churches, and have credited the fanciful explanations with which they have been entertained. The true one is the same which has placed the entrance of many monasteries so high that visitors must be hoisted up in baskets with a windlass. The Muslims were wont to ride into the churches on horseback, and thus profane what they called idol temples; and a small iron door has often resisted the efforts of the lawless marauders intent upon murder and pillage, when a larger door would have given way.*

Priests and religious men have always constituted a large and influential class in the East; and there are many particulars in the condition of the clergy at the present time, both among Christians, Muslims, and even the heathen tribes, which are derived from the ancient customs, or at least have a common origin. They have, for this reason, an important bearing upon our general subject, and deserve an inquiry.

The priesthood was anciently confined to certain families and tribes — a rule which was strictly adhered to among the Jews. The sons of Levi alone were consecrated to the Lord, both for the service of the Temple and to act as chaplains in private houses. The frequently occurring expression, "The Levite that is in thy house," is a proof of this.† But the priests were taken from the family of Aaron, the high-priest himself being a lineal descendant in the principal branch. It is doubtless the tendency both of Christianity and Islam to remove this exclusive monopoly, and open the sacred pro-

* Smith and Dwight, vol. ii., p. 211.

† Deut. xii., 12, 18; xvi., 11, 14; Judg. xvii., 7–13.

fession to all classes of the people, substituting for hereditary rights the broader principle of personal fitness and the choice of the people. The *new* element brought in has not, however, quite destroyed the *old*, and facts still testify to its former sway. There are Christian churches in the East where the office of a bishop, and particularly of the highest order of bishops, called patriarchs, is as carefully handed down from father to son as though it were the government of a principality or a kingdom. This rule holds particularly in the Nestorian, or Chaldean, Church, where these dignitaries are often ordained while mere children.* But among the Yezidies the four orders of the priesthood are not only hereditary, as among the Levites, but they are even assumed by women, in default of male heirs,† as was the case among the ancient Magians.‡ The Muslims, however, show not a trace of this hereditary principle. Even the descendants of the prophet enjoy no privilege but that of wearing the green turban.§ The vow of the Nazarite is found among the Nestorians alone. "Mothers vow not to shave a child's head, and abstain from the use of animal food during the period of gestation; and the child must do the same, if he would assume the episcopal office to which he may be destined."‖ It is also required among them that he have no physical defect or blemish,¶ and the priest, to whatever sect he may belong, can, in addition, only marry a virgin.**

The celibacy of the clergy is found among the higher orders in all the Oriental churches. This practice can not be very old in some of them; for the liturgy still in use among the Armenians (Medz Mashdots) requires that at the ordination of a bishop he be asked whether he is married, and when he has answered in the affirmative, the presiding officer must declare that the people is cursed whose spiritual guide is not married. There are, however, monasteries among all sects except the Nestorians.†† Marriage is considered honorable among the Muslims; for all classes, indeed, celibacy is deemed disreputa-

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* Smith and Dwight, vol. ii., pp. 211, 217. † Layard, vol. i., p. 250.
‡ Prideaux, vol. i., p. 395. § Lane, vol. i., p. 167. ‖ Perkins, p. 19.
¶ Lev. xxi., 17. ** Lev. xxi., 14.
†† They had their origin in Egypt many centuries before our era, and were only increased and modified by an ignorant Christianity.—WILKINSON, in Rawlinson, "Herodotus," vol. ii., p. 47, note.

ble. Even the dervishes, who constitute an order nearest akin to Christian monks, are always married, and differ from the rest of the community only in their religious zeal and peculiar rites. The Christian clergy of our times in Western Asia probably dress very nearly like the priests of the Old World. There was not much difference between Jew and heathen in this respect. Yet it is probable that the latter chiefly were imitated by the Oriental churches, for the Hebrew commonwealth was destroyed before the extensive dissemination and permanent establishment of Christianity; and it is well known that for several centuries Christians endeavored to win the heathen to their religion by conforming to such of their usages as they deemed harmless.

Among Muslims there is nothing whatever to distinguish the clergy from the laity, not even the color of their garments. Such was also the case with the Christian clergy in the apostolic age. Mohammed only re-established a custom that had once prevailed in the same land.* The green turban which now distinguishes the descendants of the prophet was not introduced till several centuries after Mohammed. The Nestorian priests wear a white robe while celebrating the communion; but at other times the clergy of this very ancient Church dress like the laity. There is nothing to distinguish even the patriarch or bishops from other men. The Yezidy priests always wear white, while the clergy of the Christian churches are clad in dark raiment, usually black. All, without exception, are attired in the flowing robe which constitutes the peculiar garment of the East.

The turban is worn by the clergy of the Coptic and Chaldean churches, the oldest in existence. The head-dress of the priests of other Christian sects appears to be a close imitation of the caps worn by the Hebrew priests in form, though not perhaps in color, for these wore caps, or cup-shaped "bonnets," in form like a cup-shaped flower, and of fine linen.† Those now in use perfectly correspond to this description, except that they are of black felt. The illustration on the following page represents a Greek priest with the robe and cap which are his every-day dress. This is the mitre of the ancients. It

* 1 Pet. ii., 5; Rev. i., 6.

† Smith, "Bible Dictionary," art. *Priests.*



Greek Priest.

implies royal dignity, was often worn by ancient kings, and is so represented on Persian monuments. The highest orders of the Armenian clergy, the monks, bishops, and patriarchs, wear, over the cap a black hood, which rests upon the shoulders, and hangs down the back; it is called "coocooly," like that of the ancient heathen priests,* and is probably an imitation of the ephod of the Hebrews.† A black cloth is similarly worn by Greek bishops. These orders of the priesthood alone preach to the people among the Armenians, in doing which they sit upon a throne (for they have no pulpits, like the Greeks or Latins), and hold a silver-mounted crozier in the right hand, while the congregation kneel at their feet or squat upon the floor. The fact that they are the lords and not the servants of the Church, is further attested by the servile bearing of the laity, who habitually stand or kneel in their presence, and kiss the hem of their garments.‡ Surely such practices do not accord with the teachings of the apostles, but rather befit heathen priests, or "scribes and Pharisees."§

Though no distinctive garb is worn among the Muslims by the clergy, yet the learned (oolema), who often officiate in the mosk, exclusively wear a peculiar white turban. There

* Churchill, "Lebanon," vol. ii., p. 88. † 1 Sam. xiv., 3.

‡ The common Greek name for a bishop is δεσπότης, *despot*. The Muslims have greatly contributed to bring about this state of things.

§ Matt. xxiii., 6, 7.

is, however, a class of people, laying claim to great piety, who dress unlike other men; these are the dervishes, of whom there are several orders, as distinct from each other as the different monks of the papacy. The Mevlevies are probably the most numerous, and certainly the wealthiest, of the regular orders. They date several centuries after Mohammed; and indeed he had nothing to do with the institution of the dervishes at all: they must be classed with other ascetics, who have sprung up in Asia in every age and under every religious system.



Armenian Bishop, with Hood.



Whirling Dervish.

The higher classes of the regular religious orders are alone supported by their endowments, and they only usually wear the regular costume of the order. The dress of the Mevlevies consists of a tall brown cap of thick felt, a gray jacket, and a robe bound to the body by a light girdle. The lower part of the robe is so ample as to spread out in a

broad circle when the wearer whirls rapidly round, like a top, in the performance of his devotions. The last illustration on the preceding page is the portrait of a man well known in the neighborhood of the Mevlevi tekkeh, or chapel, at Pera, in Constantinople. He is very gentlemanly, courteous, and well-informed. He is represented in the position he assumes when about to begin the dance which characterizes their peculiar mode of worship. This class of dervishes is the least fanatical of all.

Besides the regular orders, there are dervishes who belong nowhere, but assume the character of ascetics, prophets, or miracle-workers, for the purpose of living upon the public. They claim charity as a right, and are the most impudent beggars in the world, often inviting themselves to the houses and tables of the rich, who dare not be rude to them, for fear of the common people, who venerate them. They are usually filthy, and covered with rags. Sometimes they retire to solitary places in the neighborhood of large cities, and attract crowds by pretending to live without food. They often carry articles that are odd and strange for the purpose of drawing attention, such as the saw of a saw-fish, etc., in the specimen annexed. They have a dish suspended by a chain for receiving alms, and a sachel containing all the bearer's property. A club of steel testifies their hatred of infidels. During a battle these dervishes follow the army like a pack of hyenas, killing and plundering those of the enemy left wounded upon the field. They are fond of wearing some unusual article of dress, like the cap in our illustration. They sometimes carry a steel rod



Begging Dervish.

two feet long, with a curved cross-piece at one end, upon which they rest their heads in sleeping as they sit in the mosk, when they make a vow not to lie down during the whole month of Ramazan, and wear a leopard's skin upon their backs, like the ancient Egyptian priests.*

The "false prophets" among the Hebrews doubtless belonged to the class of people now called "begging dervishes."† We may regard our picture not only as a fair sample of the modern Muslim dervish and fakir, but also of the ancient soothsayers, jugglers, and fanatical followers of Baal and other idols; and, if we take away the odd articles with which our dervish endeavors to attract the attention of the public, we may truly say that his outward appearance, and especially his garb, gives us a not altogether incorrect idea of Elijah the prophet and John the Baptist.‡

In Muslim countries the support of the clergy is almost wholly obtained from the rent of religious endowments. The property thus owned is very large, constituting probably one-fifth of the entire real estate of the country. The burden is lightened by the small tax imposed upon those who rent it. It is bought and sold like any other property, with this proviso, that it can not be transmitted at death to any but one's own children, but reverts to the *vakoof*, and is sold for the benefit of the ecclesiastical fund. This system prevails both with the Muslim and with the Christian, with this exception, that the latter never sells ecclesiastical property, finding it more profitable and safe to rent it. The Jewish system, by which a particular tribe was set apart for divine service, and had cities and fields of their own,§ did not essentially differ from the modern, but it put limits to ecclesiastical property which the New Testament priests did not observe.‖

Whenever church property is insufficient to meet expenses, the Muslims support a moollah, or priest of their choice, who becomes their religious teacher, chants the calls to prayer, and leads their devotions in the mosk on Fridays, and in the yearly celebration of the fast of Ramazan, as well as at the two feasts of Bairam. Sometimes he teaches their children to read and

* Wilkinson, vol. i., p. 320, fig. 283.
† 1 Kings xxii., 12.
‡ Morier, quoted by Stanley, "Jewish Church," vol. ii., p. 326.
§ Numb. xxxv., 7, 8.
‖ Matt. xv., 5.

say their prayers. Among the Christians the support of the priests in such cases is derived from the altar.* The people pay for every baptism, marriage, burial, and many other ceremonies, the Armenians alone choosing their own priests. The wealthiest religious corporations are Muslim, among whom the Mevlevies, commonly called "the whirling dervishes," stand the highest. Their chief seat is Konieh, the ancient Iconium. The Turkish Government has lately taken possession of their property, paying them the annual rents instead. These doubtless in course of time will be suppressed. In Turkey, as everywhere else, it is found that wealth destroys the activity and usefulness of religious corporations.

* Deut. xviii., 1: Josh. xiii., 14, 33.

CHAPTER XI.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES.

OUR consideration of the religious sentiment among the people of Bible lands has thus far been confined to that expression of it which is found in the temples erected for the worship of the Deity, and in the priesthood which is consecrated to his special service. We now propose to go a little farther, and consider religion in some of its practical applications to the daily life of its votaries.

Humanly speaking, the idea of a *written* revelation of the divine will is an Oriental conception, and has repeatedly been carried out in Western Asia, whether honestly or through imposture. We need not dwell upon its value, or upon the blessings conferred on the race by the books of the Old and New Testaments, all of which were written by Orientals in Western Asia. In like manner were the Vedas penned in Sanscrit, and the Koran by Mohammed in Arabic; besides which many other works of a similar character have long ago perished, the most noted being the Sibylline oracles, once highly esteemed in Southern Europe. The only composition of this kind produced outside of the Asiatic continent appears to be the volume put forth in our own country by Joe Smith, the founder of the polygamous sect known as the Mormons.

It is often said that history repeats itself. This is especially true of the manner in which mankind have dealt with such books as they have believed to contain a divine revelation. A few points in this parallelism can not fail to interest the reader, for they constitute the key to most important portions of ecclesiastical history, and throw light upon some pages of Holy Writ.

The books of the Old Testament were not originally named after their authors, or their contents, as is now done by us. They derived their names from their first word; Genesis, for instance, being called "Bereshith" (In the beginning); Exo-

dus, "Ve'elah shamoth" (And these are the names), or simply "Shamoth" (names); Leviticus, "Vayikra" (And he called), etc.* We meet the same thing in the Koran: chapter viii., for instance, is entitled "the spoils;" chapter ix., "the declaration of immunity," etc. There is sufficient reason for this in the fact that the ancient manuscripts were voluminous, and rolled up in such a manner that they were best recognized by opening at the first line. But the titles of most of the chapters of the Koran, unlike our Scriptures, are purely fanciful, being taken from some story or word which occurs anywhere in the course of the chapter; such as the cow, cattle, thunder, the ant, the fig, etc.

The Jews now maintain that the Old Testament Scriptures must not be translated.† But they did not always think so. Nehemiah read the Hebrew Scriptures to the people in public, and gave the interpretation in the cognate Chaldean dialect, which had been adopted by the Jews at Babylon.‡ Subsequently several translations, or paraphrases, were made into Chaldean, and were read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day.§ A Greek version was prepared for the use of the Alexandria Jews, and was often quoted by our Lord and his apostles.‖ The Jews of the present day, however, reject all translations of the Bible, with the exception of the Karaites, a small sect in Poland and the Crimea, who discard the "traditions of the elders," and accept the Old Testament alone as their law.¶ On the other hand, the great majority of the Jews treat the Scriptures as a dead letter, and put their faith alone in the voluminous commentaries called the Talmud. So likewise the Muslims maintain that the Koran is not to be translated, nor even printed and circulated among the Arabic-speaking populations. They pay it great outward respect, and deem the reading of it a work of merit, to be put in the balance at the judgment-day. Many of their sovereigns have copied it with their own hand, as was enjoined by Moses to "him that should be king over" God's people.** At the same time they follow only the commentaries of the Koran, which are numerous and often contradictory, giving rise to many sects, the chief of which are the

* Prideaux, vol. ii., p. 106. † Stanley, "Jewish Church," Introd., p. 35.
‡ Neh. viii., 8. § Luke iv., 17; Acts xiii., 27.
‖ Matt. iv., 14–16. ¶ Prideaux, vol. iii., p. 449. ** Deut. xvii., 18.

Sunni, or Turks, and the Sheite, or Persians, bitter enemies of one another.* Yet there is a large class of men whose sole occupation consists in copying the Koran; and these correspond to the scribes of New Testament times, who were equally invested with a sacred character in the eyes of the people. There is, however, a small sect of Muslims, corresponding to the Jewish Karaites, and called Wahabies, who reject all traditions and commentaries, and accept the Koran alone as their rule of faith. We need hardly call to mind the parallel which exists in Christendom, nor point out the fact that the Karaites, the Wahabies, and the Protestants occupy precisely the same position with relation to the main bodies from which they have withdrawn, and that they have alike been the objects of their deadly hatred and persecution.

Another principle originating in Western Asia is the union, indeed the almost identity, as there practiced, of church and state. Orientals have ever been intolerant and bitter persecutors of such as differed from them in religious opinions and practices, and they have furnished by far the largest quota to "the noble army of martyrs." Their sovereigns, anxious to strengthen their authority over the people, have ever allied themselves to the priesthood,† often assuming the office of high-priest, and even claiming relationship to the gods. They made themselves the avengers of the Deity, and punished heresy as treason.‡ We have already indicated the fact that in leading the human family to the adoption of a purer faith, the author of Revelation and controller of Providence started from the point actually occupied by the heathen. In imitation of them, he adopted the Hebrews as his people, bid them fight his battles, and punish idolatry as treason to the state.§ Hence the heathen were not to be put to death for the sin of idolatry, according to the Mosaic law: this was the punishment of the Hebrews alone, and of those who, by "dwelling among them," became a part of their commonwealth.

Wherever Christianity has been planted in its purest form, it has tended to develop the rights of conscience and to cherish religious liberty, which has ever led ultimately to the sev-

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* Wortabed, "Religions of the East," p. 184.

† Gen. xlvii., 22.

‡ Rawlinson, "Herodotus," vol. i., p. 406, note 9.

§ Lev. xx., 2–6.

erance of the church and the state. This last result is both safe and desirable in the present condition of society; but it was not always so. Heretofore true religion could no more be left unprotected by the secular arm than the unarmed traveler can journey through a land infested with banditti. Religious intolerance is still the rule in the East, which is slow to feel the influence of the reformed Christian civilization of Europe; so that we yet find there, especially among the masses of the people, a pretty correct illustration of the state of things which existed in Bible times.

The Sultan of Turkey claims to be the lawful successor of Mohammed, through the caliphs who once reigned at Bagdad. There is no doubt that these effeminate sovereigns were supplanted by the chief of their Tartar guards, who, it is claimed, was related to the founder of the Osmanli dynasty. And, what is more to the purpose, the sultans possess a few hairs of the prophet's beard, his old cloak, and his original standard—the famous "Sanjak Sherif"—which is never unfurled except on occasions of great danger to the state. All Muslims, except heretics like the Persians, acknowledge the validity of the sultan's claim, which may be said to correspond to the divine appointment of the king among the Jews.* The office of the sultan, as successor of Mohammed, is both temporal and spiritual: he is at once king and high-priest, and in the latter character presides at all the great religious festivities, in the same manner as was done by the Hebrew kings,† and by the ancient sovereigns of Assyria, Persia, and Egypt.‡

The position occupied in the state by the different portions of the population depends solely on their religious creed. Those who profess the state religion, which is Islam, enjoy every privilege and emolument, every office, whether civil or military, being open to them. They constitute the only nobility or privileged class. The moment a man, be he a native or a foreigner, utters the formula, "There is no god but God, and Mohammed is the prophet of God"—though he be well known as a hypocrite, an infidel, or a heathen—that moment the highest offices are open to him; he may become prime minister,

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* Deut. xvii., 15.

† 1 Kings viii., 1–6.

‡ Stanley, "Jewish Church," vol. i., pp. 430, 432.

general in chief, or grand admiral.* Idolaters stand at the other end of the scale: if detected in the performance of heathen rites, they are mercilessly put to death. Christians enjoy a certain degree of toleration. They may worship God in their own way, but may not build new churches. They may not occupy any office of trust, whether civil or military. They are not drafted into the army, but pay a capitation-tax instead; yet they are common seamen in the navy, both because they make better sailors than the Turks, and on account of their former employment in rowing the galleys as slaves. Their testimony is not admitted in a court of justice, so that there is no possible redress for the wrongs inflicted upon them by their enemies. The Turks call them Rayas; they are their *sheep*, kept only for the sake of their wool and their flesh; and though their condition has been greatly improved through the interference of Christian governments, yet the undiminished jealousy and bigotry of the Muslims breaks out every few years into massacre and rapine. The Jews enjoy privileges in Turkey which are denied to the Christians, a circumstance explained by the fact that they aided the Turks in the conquest of the country.

The spirit of intolerance prevalent in the East may be further illustrated by the fact that though the word "Christian" has for so many centuries been the generally adopted name of the followers of Christ, yet the one hundred and twenty millions of people who use the Arabic language and profess the Muslim faith have no better name for Christians than "Nazarene."†

Forcible conversions to Islam are by no means rare in the East. When a Muslim has accidentally by some fortuitous circumstance been struck by the beauty of some Raya woman, or a handsome child of either sex, he has often been known to carry them away by force. An uncle of the writer was snatched out of his nurse's arms by some passing Turks, and reluctantly restored only on account of his belonging to European parents. Such persons are compelled to become Muslim in order to prevent their returning to their people. There is in some places a standing offer of money and clothes to any one

* Prideaux, vol. iii., p. 409. † Matt. ii., 23; xxi., 11; Acts iii., 6.

who will turn Muslim; but the strongest inducement lies in the fact that the renegade inherits the property of all his relatives at their death. It argues well for the vitality of the Christian religion, even when encumbered with superstition and ignorance, that it has for twelve hundred years successfully withstood all the endeavors of Islam to root it out of the soil of Western Asia.

The sumptuary laws of the East constitute another instrument of religious oppression. As in ancient times, so now, each class of the people is obliged to wear a garb or badge, by which it is distinguished from every other class. These sumptuary laws are frequently mentioned in history, and occur in the Pentateuch.* Nowhere are they more strictly enforced than by the Muslims upon the Raya subjects, whose garb must at a glance indicate who they are. Formerly the differences of costume were very marked, and enforced with great severity. The influence of Europe has brought about a change on the sea-board; but even there the Rayas must wear a distinctive badge upon their heads. The women are distinguished by the form and material of the veil, and the color of the cloak, the Muslim ladies wearing bright colors, while neutral tints alone are permitted to the Christian and Jewish. The slippers and boots worn by the former are bright yellow, while those of the latter are black, or dark purple. Thus a Raya and a Muslim may easily be distinguished, even in a crowd. These sumptuary laws are quite as fertile a source of oppression on the part of the dominant race as is the prohibition to Christians to bear arms, while Muslims are allowed to carry them at all times.

This feeling of hostility toward the Rayas is kept up among the Muslims by the forms adopted in social intercourse.

A follower of Islam neither gives the salaam (salutation of peace) to a Christian, nor accepts it from him,† and instead of making the usual motion with the hand (*temenah*, see page 591), he keeps it behind his back, and slightly nods his head. The same feeling is both expressed and fostered by a portion of the regular Friday noon service at the mosk, which consists of an expressive pantomime with a wooden sword.‡

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* Numb. xv., 38–40, etc. † Judg. xix., 20; Luke x., 5. ‡ Lane, vol. i., p. 106.

The precepts of the Koran respecting war are cruel enough; for they enjoin that when an enemy refuses to submit he must be put to death, and the women and children reduced to slavery. This is not done to people of their own faith and sects, but to heathen, Christians, and Muslim heretics. And let it not be supposed that we are speaking of the Middle Ages, or of a period when modern civilization, inspired by the Gospel, had not yet softened the ruder passions of men. The annals of the world do not offer worse examples of fanatical cruelty than have been perpetrated by Muslims in our own day. Three events of this nature, witnessed by the present generation, are particularly worthy of our notice. They will serve to illustrate the religious bigotry, combined with cruel violence, that have disfigured the pages of the history of Bible lands from the earliest ages to the present, and thus confirm the sacred narrative.

In 1821 the people of European Greece, after bearing the Muslim yoke for more than four hundred years, rebelled against the sultans, and claimed their freedom. The news of an outbreak in several cities of the Morea ran like wild-fire through all parts of Turkey. Instead of rousing the faithful to an effort for the subjugation of the rebels, it became a signal for a general massacre and plunder of their unoffending co-religionists, in which other Christians, and even Europeans, were sometimes included by the undiscriminating fanatics. A holy war was preached in the mosks, the effects of which were as fully felt by the peaceable Rayas at home as by the rebels on the other side of the Ægean. It would require volumes adequately to describe the scenes of horror which followed during the space of six years, until aroused Europe finally put a stop to the protracted martyrdom. Many of the fairest and most fertile islands of the Ægean—Scio, for example—were utterly ruined, through sheer and wanton cruelty. The men were put to the sword, the cities and villas burned, the beautiful plantations ruined, and the women and children carried away captive, and exposed for sale in the markets of Smyrna and Constantinople. We have repeatedly met with Greek captives who had become the wives of Muslims, yet had neither forgotten their mother tongue nor relinquished in their hearts the faith of their fathers.

Still more heart-rending, if possible, were the events which occurred in 1843 in some of the deep valleys of the mountains of Koordistan. Bedr Khan Bey, chief of the so-called Muslim Koords of that region, having secured the connivance of the neighboring pasha of Mossul, and the support of high officials at the capital, assumed the airs of a religious devotee, and began to preach a war of extermination against the Nestorian or Chaldean Christians inhabiting the same mountains, though the latter had done nothing whatever to excite his resentment. They are, indeed, a bold and hardy race, usually able to defend themselves against an assailing foe. But they were caught with guile, and their fears were lulled by the solemn oaths of their enemies, as well as the traitorous assurances of the Turkish authorities. Unprepared for the struggle, they were suddenly and separately attacked by their blood-thirsty foes. No less than ten thousand men were put to the sword, and many more women and children were enslaved, some of whom were ransomed and sent back to their desolate homes through the generosity of foreign Christians.

Three years after these events the scene of the principal massacre is thus described by a visitor: "When the slaughter of the people of Ashita became known in the valley of Lizan, the inhabitants of the villages took refuge on a lofty platform of rock, where they hoped either to escape notice, or to defend themselves against any number of assailants. Bedr Khan Bey surrounded the place, and watched until hunger and thirst, in the sultry hot weather, had done their work. After three days a regular capitulation was signed, and sworn on the Koran; their arms were delivered up; and the Koords were admitted on the platform. Then did the slaughter begin. To save the trouble of killing them, they were pitched into the Zab below. Out of about one thousand only one escaped from the massacre. The face of the rock below is still covered with the scattered bones of the dead, bleached skulls, long locks of women's hair, and torn portions of the garments they had worn!"* It was thus that in ancient times the heathen kings carried unprovoked war into their neighbors' lands, and massacred the inoffensive inhabitants, to the glory of their gods.

* Layard, "Nineveh," vol. i., pp. 165, 166.

The deities of Egypt fought against those of Assyria, and the gods of Babylon against the Lord God of Israel, and their servants only went forth at their bidding. This is clearly stated in the speech of Rabshakeh, Sennacherib's cup-bearer,* to the people of Jerusalem.† In both cases, however—in the ancient as well as in the modern—it is easy to distinguish the selfishness and cruelty of the human heart through the thin veil of religious fanaticism in which it seeks to conceal its deformity.

We shall refer to one more event of this kind: it is the massacre of the Christians of Mount Lebanon, in Syria, by the Turks and Druses, in 1860. There was a rumor, probably started by the Druses themselves, that the Christians were procuring arms, and intended soon to drive them out of the mountains. The officials of the Porte at Constantinople formed a conspiracy for the blotting out of the Christian name in those parts; they appointed their own creatures to the governments of Damascus, Beirut, and Sidon, and furnished them with soldiers, who were posted as garrisons in the chief towns inhabited by Christians, under pretense of defending them against the Druses. When all was ready, the savage Druses of the Hauran were summoned, and they and their brethren of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon immediately set themselves to burning the villages and killing the people without any provocation. They put to death every male, even the infant at the breast, and enslaved as many of the women and girls as they chose.‡ The Turkish garrisons at first simply looked on; then they urged the Christians to take refuge in the castles, on condition of delivering up whatever weapons they might possess. They swore by the Koran that no harm should be done them. But no sooner were they thus entrapped than the Druses were called in, and every one of these helpless victims was shot down, or had his throat cut, in cold blood. The streets of Deir-el-Kamr, Hosbayah, and Zahleh flowed with human gore, in which men waded ankle-deep. The worst scenes occurred in Damascus, the centre of Muslim fanaticism, where, until lately, no Christian was allowed to ride in the streets. Here the pasha himself directed the operations; and after the butch-

* Bonomi, p. 172. † 2 Kings xviii., 30, 33–35; Isa. xxxvii., 10–13, 19, 23.
‡ Deut. xx., 13, 14.

ery of the Christians and the plunder of their property, their quarter of the city was set on fire and burned down. But for the interference of the Moorish chief, Ab'd-el-Kadir, who saved twelve thousand Christians at the peril of his own life, scarcely one would have escaped slavery or death. The following is the summing up of the results of those few days of unrestrained religious fury; it was drawn up immediately after the events by a commission of the allied European powers: "Eleven thousand Christians massacred; one hundred thousand sufferers by the civil war; twenty thousand desolate widows and orphans; three thousand Christian habitations burned to the ground; four thousand Christians perished of destitution; ten million dollars (gold) property destroyed."*

We believe that a better day is dawning upon the lands of the Bible, and that religious toleration and the rights of conscience are beginning to be understood by many minds even there. Bigotry and intolerance, however, form the essence of Islam as well as of all the heathen systems which have prevailed on the Asiatic continent, and they can be rooted out only by the diffusion of the principles of religious liberty which are taught by evangelical Christianity.

The topics which come within the scope of the present chapter occupy so wide a range as to appear to have little connection with one another; but the limits we have set for ourselves compel us to adopt a desultory and rapid treatment of the subject, rather than one which would more clearly indicate the logical connection of the different parts.

The offering of sacrifices to the Deity by shedding the blood of such animals as are at once the most harmless and the most useful to man, is a custom which originated in Western Asia, a rite doubtless instituted by God himself, at least so far as it is connected with the idea of an atonement.† The reader of ancient history can not fail to be struck with the contrast between ancient and modern times in this respect. Formerly sacrifices by blood were of constant occurrence in all parts of the

* Churchill, "Lebanon," vol. iv., p. 219. The fourth volume of this valuable work contains an account of human depravity and suffering, whose truthfulness we could not admit were it not supported by the strongest concurring testimony and our own observations both on Mount Lebanon and in other parts of Turkey.

† Gen. iii., 15, 21; iv., 1, 4.

world, except among the Egyptians, who worshiped that which the others offered up.* The monuments of antiquity confirm the testimony of history. The sculptures of the Romans and the Greeks, as well as those of the Assyrians and the Persians, abound with pictures of sacrifices, often executed with remarkable skill. Many ancient ruins contain altars upon which the blood of the victims has left indelible marks, traceable, in some cases, to the lintels of the temple doors.† What a contrast to our modern times! Christianity has abolished sacrifices by teaching their completion in the death of Christ; and even those forms of it which do not acknowledge the sufficiency of the latter have softened down the shedding of blood to the "offering" of bread and wine. There are yet no less than six hundred and fifty millions of heathen in the world, but bloody sacrifices have become comparatively rare even among them. Yet there still exist many mementos of the former state of things in Western Asia which are worthy of our attention as they come within our scope.

Living creatures, sheep, goats, cattle, and even camels are yet slaughtered and offered in sacrifice to the Deity in the lands of the Bible, though it is hard to say how much the idea of an atonement is connected with the act. To begin with the heathen, we find some of the Caucasian tribes offering sacrifices at annual festivals, or on occasion of special deliverances. This is done in the sacred groves. The officiating priest, with his head uncovered, bows before the emblem of the Deity, and slaughters a lamb, goat, sheep, or even a full-grown ox of unusual beauty, according to the importance of the occasion. Before immolation he takes one of the pine torches that stand blazing before the religious emblem, and burns the hair off that part of the body where he intends to strike. He then pours upon the head of the victim a goblet of "bak-sima," the strong drink of the Circassians (the "boza" of the Turks). The beast is then slain, and a cup of strong drink is first offered to the Deity,‡ and then drunk in turn by all the company present. The head of the animal is hung to the branch of a tree in the sacred grove; the skin is given to the priest;§ and

* Exod. viii., 26; Prideaux, vol. iii., pp. 36, 37, note.
† Layard, "Nineveh," vol. i., p. 202; Exod. xii., 22.
‡ Numb. xxviii., 7. § Lev. vii., 8.

the flesh is eaten by all who take part in the sacrifice.* Other food is usually added,† so that the religious ceremony ends with a feast, the guests eating and drinking, then singing and dancing to instrumental music, and engaging in games and athletic sports. Such was the custom among the heathen in ancient times, according to the graphic account given by Moses of the worship of the golden calf at the foot of Sinai: "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."‡

We have already spoken of the sacrifice of a cock by Kuzul Bash and Turkmen tribes in their secret nightly meetings; but we have not been able to ascertain the ideas they connect with the rite. The Ali Allahis of Persia sacrifice a sheep in similar gatherings; the priest distributes the flesh to the votaries, who receive it on their knees, and the service closes, with prayers and chants.§

The Muslims also offer sacrifices of slaughtered animals, some of which are enjoined by the Koran, while others have an anterior origin. To the latter belong the ceremonies performed by the Arabs at the tomb of Sheikh Saleh, on the Sinaitic peninsula, in which they sacrifice sheep and camels, sprinkling the blood on the walls of the chapel; the assembled Desert tribes feast upon the flesh, and close the ceremonies with dances, races, and athletic sports.‖ The Arabs sacrifice a sheep on the top of Mount Serbal (near Horeb), and cast its body over the rocks, somewhat reminding us of the scape-goat of the Mosaic ritual.¶ Muslims also offer sacrifices of thanksgiving after a special deliverance (see page 198). In this light must be viewed the slaughtering of beasts which takes place on the shah's entrance into his capital after an absence,** while the confectionery poured at his horse's feet is an expression of pleasure.††

But the great sacrifice enjoined by the Koran occurs at Corban-Bairam (the Feast of Sacrifices). Some of the observances

* Lev. vii., 19. † Lev. vii., 12, 13.

‡ Exod. xxxii., 6; Judg. xvi., 23, 25; 1 Cor. x., 7.

§ Rawlinson, "Herodotus," vol. i., p. 218, note 4.

‖ Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," p. 57.

¶ Lev. xvi., 22; Stanley, "Jewish Church," vol. i., p. 187, note.

** This used to be done on festive occasions in all parts of Turkey.—THEVENOT, part i., chap. lxvi., p. 233.

†† Morier, "Second Journey," p. 387.

bear a resemblance to the Jewish Passover, but no historical association attaches to any of them. The head of every household, having provided himself with a sheep, slaughters it on the morning of that day at sunrise, the act being accompanied with prescribed ceremonies and prayers. The flesh is eaten by the family, and the rich send portions to the poor. The sultan's own share amounts to no less than three hundred thousand sheep, which he gives away beforehand, to be slaughtered by the recipients. The whole number offered on that day by the one hundred and fifty millions who constitute the Muslim population of the world must indeed be large, though it is impossible exactly to estimate it. On this day the pilgrims who yearly visit the Caaba, or temple, at Mecca, assemble in the valley of Mineh to sacrifice rams, goats, cows, and she-camels, the flesh of which they eat or give to the poor. They also at this time shave their heads,* clip their nails, take off their pilgrim's garb, dress in holiday attire, and give themselves to rejoicing and feasting.† The number of animals slaughtered on this occasion varies from one hundred and eighty to four hundred thousand;‡ and the accumulated offal frequently breeds a fatal pestilence, which is carried home by the pilgrims on their return to their respective countries. Thus it will be seen that the sacrifices offered by the Muslims are really in excess of those of the Hebrews of ancient times, who were forbidden to offer theirs out of Jerusalem, and were often remiss in their observance of the Passover;§ for the daily morning and evening sacrifice of a lamb in the Temple, and the other required oblations, amounted to eleven hundred for the whole year,‖ and it was only on such an occasion as the dedication of the Temple by Solomon that "twenty-two thousand oxen and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep" were slaughtered.¶

The sacrifices most closely resembling the offering of the Paschal lamb are those which still yearly occur on Mount Gerizim, according to the rite of the Samaritans. After the capture of Samaria by the Assyrians, her people were carried away to the modern province of Azerbijan, and a colony of foreigners was settled in their place. The ravages of war had

* Acts xxi., 24.
† Lane, vol. i., p. 116; Wortabed, p. 221.
‡ Thevenot, p. 157.
§ 2 Kings xxiii., 22; 2 Chron. xxxv., 1.
‖ Prideaux, vol. ii., p. 270.
¶ 1 Kings viii., 63.

caused the wild beasts, especially lions, greatly to increase,* and the superstitious notions of these people became the means of introducing among them the five books of Moses in the original Hebrew, written—as first penned by the author—in the old character, for which the Chaldean was substituted after the captivity. This they still preserve with jealous care. The old enmity between the Jews and the Samaritans yet exists.† The latter had a temple on Mount Gerizim (built B.C. 409), a place more appropriate in their view than Moriah, a part of Mount Zion, being hallowed by early Hebrew history,‡ by Abraham's offering of Isaac, and his presenting to Melchisedek a tenth of the spoil.§ After the destruction of this temple, the people continued to venerate the mount,‖ and they still worship toward that sacred spot as their kùbleh. Every year, too, at the Passover they ascend to the top of Mount Gerizim: standing before an altar of twelve stone slabs, said to have been brought there from the bed of the Jordan by order of Joshua,¶ they slay the Paschal lamb, eat the flesh upon the spot, and burn the remainder.**

Many of the ancient heathen offered *human* victims to their gods. The Phœnicians and the Moabites burned their children to Moloch, and the Hebrews repeatedly fell into this form of idolatry.†† Even the polished Greeks were very anciently addicted to the same superstition. These cruel rites have long ago disappeared from the lands of the Bible; but mementos of the practice are occasionally met with. Such is a part of the ceremony of letting the water of the Nile into the canals. The Arabic history of Ben Ayas contains the following incident, which has probably some foundation in truth: The Muslim conqueror of Egypt, Amroo, was asked permission by the people of that country, at the time of the rising of the Nile, to propitiate the river by the offering of a human sacrifice; for said they, "It is our custom on the 13th of the month Baooneh (June 7) to select a young and handsome virgin; we carry her away by force from her parents, and throw her into the Nile

* 2 Kings xvii., 25.
† John iv., 9; viii., 48.
‡ Josh. viii., 33.
§ Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," p. 234.
‖ John iv., 20.
¶ Josh. iv., 1–3.
** Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," p. 245; "Jewish Church," vol. i., p. 563.
†† Jer. xxxii., 35; Ezek. xx., 31.

at the spot consecrated to this ceremony." Amroo forbade the cruel rite, and, instead of the virgin, cast into the Nile a paper on which the Caliph Omar had written a prayer to God to furnish the water of the river. The unusual rise of the Nile which ensued forever settled the question of sacrificing a virgin; but the ancient custom is commemorated at the yearly opening of the canals by throwing into the river a rudely formed image of a woman, made of clay and adorned with flowers, which is called "arooseh," or the betrothed.* It is not probable that the barbarous rite to which we have alluded was tolerated by Christianity; but the well-known modern ceremony can be explained only by supposing the early existence of some such custom.†

Human sacrifices, indeed, still exist; but they are mostly confined to the interior of Africa, whose climate and deserts render it difficult of access to the influence of civilization. It is there intimately connected with the system of slavery. It is well known that the blood-thirsty tyrants of Dahomey, after sacrificing many human victims during their lives, are mourned for at their death by the slaughter of many hundreds more. In Eastern Africa the slave-traders, when carrying their merchandise to market, throw a beautiful slave into the Lake Umo, to propitiate the spirits, and obtain a good price for the rest. And at Senjero, in the same region, an ancient custom, strictly maintained by the soothsayers or priests of that unhappy land, requires certain families to deliver up their first-born sons to the sacrifice, and their blood is poured upon the king's throne.‡

The existence of human sacrifices is recognized in the Pentateuch by the provision made for "singular vows," which required the commission of murder. In all cases of this nature, money was to be paid instead, according to age and sex.§ The story of Jephthah and his daughter shows how great occasion existed for such a law.‖ The Israelite hero was evidently ignorant of the legal provision made to meet his case. He lived in the very region—east of the Jordan—where human sacrifices were most common, and where Moloch was the ruling deity. Jephthah was a freebooter, a highway robber; he had nei-

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* Marcel, pp. 19, 20.
† Thevenot, p. 234; Pococke, vol. i., p. 27.
‡ Krapf, p. 58.
§ Lev. xxvii., 2–8.
‖ Judg. xi., 30–40.

ther priest nor prophet to guide him. His daughter herself was ready to die, "forasmuch as the Lord had taken vengeance upon his enemies, even the children of Ammon." And so, after two months delay, "he did with her according to his vow." His family perished; for she was his only child, and "had known no man."* The extraordinary character of the occurrence produced a deep impression upon the Israelites, which was maintained by the yearly celebration of the day. It became a warning to the Hebrews against rash vows; and yet such an immolation of a daughter is far better than the heathen practice of giving her up to the obscene service of the idol temple,† or even to the seclusion of a convent, Christian only in name.

Vows are still common in the East, even among Christians, despite the command of our Lord upon the subject.‡ The common form is a promise that, should protection be vouchsafed against an impending calamity, or aid granted in the acquirement of some desired object, a sheep, a goat, or a specified sum of money, will be offered at the shrine of a particular saint.§ In testimony of such vows a piece of one's garment is sometimes torn off and tied to a bush, or other convenient object near the grave of the saint, or in the wilderness where such a vow may have been made.‖ Another form of pledge consists of a pile of stones, commonly but two, set one upon the other, over which the vow is pronounced. This custom particularly prevails among the Persians,¶ and reminds us of Jacob's pillar at Bethel, and of the vow he pronounced upon it.** The shepherds of Koordistan pour butter upon a prominent rock, as Jacob poured oil upon his pillar. But their practice simply consists in the offering of the first-fruits of their flocks,†† and it occurs once a year, in early spring. The rock upon which this offering is made is a natural altar, to which the shepherds of the region all resort; it is called the "Rock of Butter."‡‡ The custom of offering the first-fruits of the earth

* All the earlier interpreters, Josephus and Jonathan the Targumist among them, adopt the literal interpretation of the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter.

† Strabo, bk. xvii., chap. i., § 46. ‡ Matt. v., 33–37.

§ Gen. xxviii., 20; Jonah i., 16; Lane, vol. i., p. 302. ‖ Perkins, p. 191.

¶ Morier, "Second Journey," p. 84; "Haji Baba," vol. i., p. 295.

** Gen. xxviii., 18–22. †† Lev. ii., 12. ‡‡ Layard, "Nineveh," vol. i., p. 180.

is particularly prevalent among the heathen Circassians, and constitutes a feast in which all the tribes take part for several days.*

Another religious practice common among the people of Bible lands is fasting and "afflicting the body." Grief, as well as joy, is intense with them; and its common outward form consists in the neglect of the body, the putting away of every ornament as well as whatever can render the person attractive, and the use of a meagre diet; indeed, they often partake of no food for an incredibly long time. Hence fasting has come to be a regular religious practice with them, quite as much as prayer, and is usually performed with as little discernment or spiritual benefit. Absolute abstinence from food being impossible beyond a limited period, various devices have been adopted to enable a person to observe a long fast, and yet continue his usual labor. The Christians, anxious to outdo the Jews in their short but thorough fasts, content themselves with abstinence from meat and the products of the dairy. But they make up for the lack of severity by length of time, one of their fasts continuing forty days, and another sixty. They, moreover, fast twice a week through the whole year.† The Muslims ridicule what they call a mere change of diet; they abstain from tasting food from sunrise until sunset, not taking a drop of water into their mouths in the hottest weather, nor even a puff from their much-loved chibook or nargileh. But, as they are unwilling to be outdone by the Christians in the length of their fast, they must needs continue it during the entire lunar month of Ramazan, and make up for fasting by day by feasting at night. Thus the day and the night simply change places, and the people spend in feasting all the earnings of the preceding year. Business is virtually at a stand-still for a whole month, the rich spending most of the day in sleep, while the poor have but little energy for work, and, as a consequence, grow poorer than before. Add to this, that the fast comes gradually round to every season and month of the year, and interferes in turn with every branch of labor and every industry.‡ Exemption from the observance of this fast is al-

* Spencer, vol. ii., p. 349; Lev. xxiii., 10.
† Luke xviii., 12.
‡ Smith and Dwight, "Researches," vol. ii., pp. 209, 235.

lowed, as by the law of Moses in the case of the Passover, only on account of sickness or on a journey, on condition that it be observed upon recovery or at the journey's end.*

The student of the Scriptures can not fail to have noticed the importance attached in New Testament times to the giving of alms. The increased population, the inequality of conditions, the ravages of war, and bad government had reduced vast numbers of human beings to a state of utter destitution, and it became the imperative duty of the rich to provide for the poor. Hence the frequent commendation passed by the inspired volume upon such, even among the heathen, as give alms to the destitute.† Our Lord commended the giving of alms on more than one occasion;‡ and the apostles and early disciples were examples of this virtue, and taught it everywhere.§ The condition and numbers of the poor, so far from indicating an improvement in modern times, are an evidence of still greater suffering than at the beginning of the Christian era, and moralists of every religious sect have been agreed upon the imperative duty of caring for them. Few well-to-do people in the East can pass by a beggar without giving him the customary piece of copper, the five-para bit (equal to half a cent). The police never interfere with the beggars, except to push them aside when too obtrusive. There are, of course, all sorts of characters among them. Some are impostors, and live in comparative ease, while the most deserving and wretched of the poor never appear in the street. Most of the poor, however, make their wants known to the public by begging. Paralytics are laid down at the doors of the rich, or of the church or mosk, with the idea that men are most inclined to be charitable when they come from the house of feasting or of prayer.‖ The blind lift up their voices as they grope their way from door to door along the streets.¶ In some cities Saturday is beggar's day, and every merchant, shop-keeper, and housewife lays by a store of coppers and the remnants of food. As the beggars go from door to door, and from one shop to another, their voices are heard from morning till night, crying, "It is

* Numb. ix., 10, 11.
† Acts x., 4, etc. ‡ Matt. xix., 21; Luke xi., 41; xii., 33.
§ Acts iv., 34; xxiv., 17; 1 John iii., 17.
‖ Luke xvi., 20; Acts iii., 2. ¶ Matt. ix., 27; Mark x., 47.

Saturday to-day," and invoking blessings upon their benefactors, as well as upon their ancestors and their posterity.* Some charitable persons, not content with giving the customary pittance, build houses for the poor, who pay a merely nominal rent, which serves to keep the building in repair. Others construct an aqueduct, or erect a public fountain, whether in the town or upon the road, for the relief of travelers; they build a khan, or caravanseraÿ, in which lodgings may be had without charge, or pave a road through some difficult pass. Among the Nestorian Christians dwelling in the fertile plain of Ooroomia charity assumes an almost apostolic form; for it is their yearly practice to lay by a certain portion of their crops in order to supply the wants of their brethren living among the rugged mountains of Koordistan, whose food often fails them altogether, or is carried away by their more powerful enemies.† Deeds of charity are highly extolled in the Koran, and the value of such acts is more particularly felt where the rulers take no interest in works of public utility.

Modern Orientals, like the Hebrews, the Egyptians, and other ancient nations, give themselves much concern about ceremonial or conventional cleanliness, and though Christians have become free from the superstitious dread of uncleanness, yet there are remains of it even among them. The Persians are most noted in this particular, deeming it a compensation for many vices. The Abyssinians, though nominal Christians, practice circumcision, and regard the uncircumcised as unclean, refusing to eat out of the same plate or drink out of the same cup with them.‡ Muslims are required by their religion to wash the whole body every Friday morning, which is their Sabbath; the same is done at every festival. Washing is also required before each of the five daily prayers, called "namaz;" but it is confined to the face, hands, and feet, being accompanied by a short form of prayer. When in a hurry, the whole is performed in two minutes, the namaz itself being included; and when water is not to be had sand may be used instead,§ a practice probably derived from the early Christians, who baptized by the application of sand when they had no water.‖

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* Lam. iv., 14. † Rom. xv., 26. ‡ Acts xi., 3; Bruce, vol. iii., p. 671.
§ Lane, vol. i., p. 89. ‖ Sales, Koran, "Preliminary Discourse," p. 75.

The practice of washing before prayer appears to have been derived from the Jews, who also held to many other washings and baptisms, as they still do, particularly when defiled by touching a dead body or blood.* The same is the case with the Muslims;† but the Persians, though filthy in many of their habits, have usually more horror of touching blood than of shedding it, and will not use white sugar because they have heard that it is clarified with blood.‡ In New Testament times, the Jews practiced washing before eating as a religious duty; but the similar custom of modern Orientals is simply an act of cleanliness. The bigoted Muslim believes that the use of an article by a Christian renders it unclean, so that it must be broken if it belongs to the class of absorbents, like an earthen vessel, and must be washed if it be of metal or cloth.§

The same animals are now deemed unclean in the East that were pronounced to be so by the Mosaic law.‖ But the Arab tribes eat the camel, and offer it in sacrifice. The gypsies make little distinction, for they eat even mice (see page 284). Most Christians eschew the hare, but partake of the flesh of the wild boar, which the Muslims kill and sell to the Christians without touching it.¶ The ancient Egyptians similarly regarded swine as unclean, and so do their descendants, the Christian Copts, as well as the Abyssinians.**

We now come to the chief expression of the religious sentiment of a people, the act of worship, which usually comprises adoration, thanksgiving, and prayer. And here the first point worthy of notice is, that Orientals of every religion make use of set forms. This appears to have been the case among the Jews in our Lord's time; for his disciples requested him to teach them a set form of prayer, as John had taught his disciples; and he complied with their request.†† But this form did not preclude the use of extempore prayer;‡‡ nor does it at

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* Lev. xi., 24, etc.; Josephus, vol. ii., p. 275, note; Mark vii., 4, orig.

† As it was with the ancient Babylonians and Arabians.—HERODOTUS, bk. i., ch. 198.

‡ Perkins, p. 271.

§ Layard, "Nineveh," vol. i., p. 80.

‖ Lev. xi., 4–7.

¶ Deut. xiv., 8, 21.

** Herodotus, bk. ii., ch. 47; Maurice, p. 143.

†† Luke xi., 1.

‡‡ Matt. xxvi., 39; John xvii.; Acts iv., 23–30.

the present day, among any class of people whatsoever. This appears also to have been the case in the ancient synagogue service, where, as now, a liturgy of prayer and praise was used.* The forms of prayer employed in the East, both in the churches and in private devotions, have doubtless produced this good effect, that in times of great ignorance and most cruel oppression, they have preserved alive among the people the memory of Christianity, and have prepared the way for its revival.

Church services take place daily—in the morning at sunrise, and in the evening near sunset, corresponding to the offering of the Temple sacrifice. The communion is administered at the great festivals, and the priests fast until the service is over. The Abyssinians use, instead of wine, a marmalade prepared of the unfermented juice of the grape.† Much is made, in all the sects, of the consecrated oil, prepared under the direction of their highest ecclesiastical dignitary, and sold with no little profit to the treasury of the church. It is prepared according to the Mosaic rule;‡ but the sacred oil of the Hebrews was made, once for all, in the wilderness; it was lost at the captivity, and after it neither high-priest nor king was ever anointed.§ The Christian "miron," however, is manufactured every year at the metropolis; it is found in every church, and is used in a variety of circumstances from baptism to extreme unction.

We have already mentioned the "namaz," or daily prayer of the Muslims. It is recited, as nearly as convenient, at sunrise, noon, three o'clock P.M., at sunset, and an hour and a half later, which is called bed-time. This is an amplification of a Jewish "tradition of the elders," which enjoined three seasons of daily prayer, *i. e.*, morning, noon, and night.‖ The Muslim may pray anywhere, and the more ostentatious the place the greater the merit.¶ To obtain a reputation for sanctity, they often "make long prayers, using vain repetitions."** It is evident that their minds are little engaged in these exercises, for they look around, salute a friend, or tell a person that they will give him some desired information as soon as they get through.†† The services of the mosk on Friday differ little

* Prideaux, vol. ii., p. 160.
‡ Exod. xxx., 22-31.
‖ Ibid., vol. ii., p. 167.
** Matt. vi., 7; xxiii., 14.
† Bruce, vol. iii., p. 664.
§ Prideaux, vol. i., p. 314.
¶ Matt. vi., 5.
†† Perkins, "Persia," p. 85.

from the daily prayer, certain passages from the Koran and other forms serving to lengthen the performance. Repetitions are used to a greater or less extent by the votaries of every religion in the East, and for this purpose beads are counted upon a string.*

Orientals are very particular in selecting the spot on which they pray; it must not have been used for unclean purposes, nor in any way have been defiled. Hence Muslims never pray in a sleeping apartment or a closet,† but in an open hall, garden, or on a house-top.‡ They never kneel upon the bare ground, if they can help it, but spread a cloth or rug, upon which they perform their devotions, after removing their shoes. A stag or deer skin is deemed the holiest, and many keep them for this purpose; but the "sejadeh," or praying-carpet, is in general use. The custom is probably very ancient, and the pattern of the rug—doubtless quite antique—uniformly represents a garden whose flowers gradually turn toward the kùbleh, while large leaves show where the knees ought to rest.

With the exception of the Christians, most Orientals turn their faces, when they pray, toward a particular point in the heavens, which they call their kùbleh. This with the Jews is Jerusalem,§ and was at first with the Muslims; but Mohammed soon changed it to Mecca.‖ The kùbleh of the Yezidies is the east, where the sun rises, as it used to be with the Magians;¶ while the Nestorian Christians betray their origin by turning their faces toward the same point, even in their private devotions.** The word kùbleh, however, is also used to denote the niche in the mosk, or elsewhere the table, the chair, the turban, or other object set down temporarily to indicate the direction of Mecca. Should this article be displaced, or should any thing pass between it and the worshiper, it is sure to excite his wrath, for he has to begin his prayers over again.

Various positions are assumed in prayer, both in public and in private. The common postures are the same which are assumed in the presence of a superior, *i. e.*, standing, with the hands placed one upon the other on the girdle (see page 593); kneeling, with the body resting upon the feet; or bowing, with

* Lane, vol. i., pp. 99, etc. † Matt. vi., 6. ‡ Acts x., 9.
§ 1 Kings viii., 38; Dan. vi., 10. ‖ Lane, vol. i., p. 89.
¶ Layard, vol. i., p. 248. ** Perkins, "Persia," p. 186.

the hands resting upon the knees (see page 648). The position of the hands, which denotes adoration and prayer, consists in stretching out the arms and turning the palms upward. This was evidently the practice with the ancients. "Moses stretched out his hands" in prayer during the battle with Amalek.* Solomon, at the dedication of the Temple, "stood and spread forth his hands toward heaven" while he offered prayer.† And in the New Testament it is mentioned as synonymous with prayer.‡ We have pictures of this posture in ancient sculptures.§ There seems, however, to have been a slight difference in the manner of holding the fingers among different nations, and they may, for aught we know, have attached as much importance to the matter as different Christian churches now do to the number of fingers with which they make the sign of the cross.‖

But standing and kneeling are not the only postures assumed in prayer. The worshiper sometimes prostrates himself, with the palms of his hands lying flat on the earth, and his face, forehead, or turban touching the ground¶ (for the head is not uncovered), the sleeves are brought as far as possible over the hands, and the bare feet are hidden by the nether garments. The positions assumed by Christians are more spontaneous than those of the Muslims, for the latter are very formal, every posture and motion being minutely prescribed, as well as the words they repeat.

It is customary in the East, when a person expresses a wish or a hope, to respond by saying "Amen," where an Occidental would merely give assent, or an assembly clap their hands. This practice prevails as much among the Muslims as among Christians, and special emphasis is given to it by laying the hand upon the breast.** The use of the word Amen is very ancient, and we have so far adopted it as to place it at the close

* Exod. xvii., 11. † 1 Kings viii., 22. ‡ 1 Tim. ii., 8.

§ Bonomi, p. 309.

‖ Ibid., p. 292; "Travels in Asia Minor," vol. ii., pp. 134, 136.

¶ Lev. ix., 24; Numb. xiv., 5; Josh. vii., 6; Matt. xxvi., 39. In Gen. xlix., 33, the meaning probably is that Jacob would have prostrated himself on his face, but being too feeble, he did so upon his couch, like David in similar circumstances (1 Kings i., 47); or, as the Septuagint has it, leaning upon a staff, as often done by cripples in the East.

** Numb. v., 22. "Selah" appears to have been used similarly.

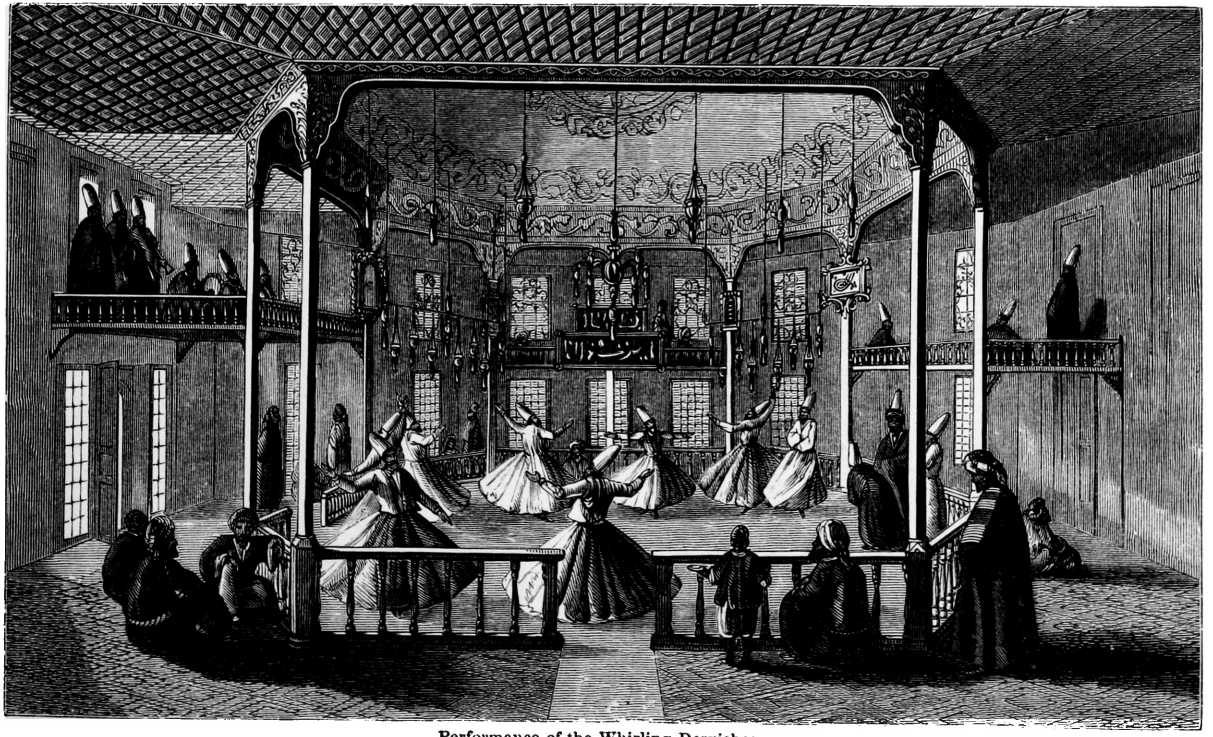
of our prayers, chiefly as a sign that they are ended. In the East, it was not the priest but the people who said Amen, in order to show that they joined in the petition.* But when the language of the church service came to be an "unknown tongue" to the people, "they that occupied the room of the unlearned" knew not when to say Amen, so that the officiating priest had to say it for them. Thus our own practice in this respect is really an inheritance from the Dark Ages and our step-mother, the Papal Church. Wherever in the East, at the present day, the vernacular has supplanted the ancient tongue in divine worship, there the people have spontaneously gone back to the old Hebrew and apostolic practice: the earnest ejaculation, "Amen," is often heard during both prayer and sermon, and at the close the whole congregation respond as with one voice.

Orientals never read or recite in a conversational tone, but use what we call intoning, while their bodies sway backward and forward. The prayers of the Church are chanted, and so is the reading of the Scriptures. There is not much musical taste exhibited in the performance, which has an origin probably anterior to Christianity. The chanting of the different sects is very similar. Many of the hymns date back to an early age of the Church, particularly those in Armenian, which are pronounced very fine by competent judges; but their metre is peculiar, every line containing more than twenty syllables, and there being no rhyme, as in the ancient Greek verses. They are sung by the men and boys who compose the choir, the priests also joining in. No musical instruments are ever used except in the Syrian Church, where cymbals are struck in this part of the service.†

The Muslim services contain nothing which corresponds to the Christian singing of hymns; Mohammed evidently had no music in him; but the various orders of dervishes which have sprung up since his day make signal use of it in their devotions. Their practice in this respect is worthy of a moment's consideration, as it illustrates some interesting passages of Scripture.

The Mevlevies are known in the West by the name of

* 1 Chron. xvi., 36; 1 Cor. xiv., 16. † Fletcher, p. 301.



Performance of the Whirling Dervishes.

"whirling dervishes," derived from the peculiar dance which characterizes their religious services. Their idea seems to be that the highest form of religious contemplation consists in a dizzy dreaminess, which is produced in the following manner: their sheikh, or leader, takes his place on a small mattress near the edge of a circular space bounded by a colonnade and railing, occupying the centre of their tekkeh, or chapel. After the repetition of sundry forms of prayer, the dervishes, barefoot, and wearing their tall felt caps and full robes, stand around the circle, each with his arms crossed upon his breast, and his hands resting on his shoulders. The silence is now broken by the soft and mellow harmony of several flutes (nay), whose notes are uttered in a plaintive minor key. Catching the inspiration, one and then another of the dervishes, with eyes closed and arms stretched out, begins to whirl like a top, first slowly and in a stationary position, then rapidly and around the circle, his robe stretching in the form of a cone, some five feet in diameter. The music now becomes more animated, and some tambourines join in; the rapidly whirling devotees keep wonderfully clear of each other, and finally come to a stand-still in turn, each finishing with a graceful bow to the sheikh. The scene is striking and peculiar, and some idea of it may be obtained from the sketch on the opposite page.

There is another order of religious devotees, still more numerous than the Mevlevies, though not so wealthy, who are well characterized by their popular name of "howling dervishes." They usually meet Tuesdays and Thursdays in the evening, and sit upon the floor in a circle, the sheikh occupying a little mattress, slightly raised above the rest. After some preliminary chanting and recitations, they begin to pronounce ninety times each of the ninety-nine names by which they designate the Deity, bowing the head every time, while the sheikh counts the numbers on a long string of beads. They go on thus, becoming more and more excited, and bowing lower and lower, until they come to the last and, in the opinion of Muslims, the greatest name of all, "Hoo;" they then spring to their feet, and holding each other's hands, begin to dance in a circle in the most frantic manner, bending their bodies double, then raising them and bending them backward, all the time crying in unison, "Hoo! Hoo!" They presently pull off their upper

garments, leaving their chests bare, and drop their caps, or turbans; and as they never shave their heads nor cut their hair, their long locks now fly loosely about their faces and shoulders. Some one outside the circle now strikes the timbrel, beating the time and adding to the excitement; the devotees perspire at every pore; their cries grow frantic; but as they ere long become faint with exhaustion, the sound gradually dies away into a mere groan, until the fanatics drop one by one, apparently more dead than alive, and looking as though they had fallen in a fit.*

The Druses of Syria, it would seem, sometimes dance in connection with religious rites. The Yezidy performances at the tomb of Sheikh Adi very nearly resemble those of the howling dervishes; but they sing Arabic hymns, and the musicians play upon timbrels and flutes. The young men, and even the young women, join in the dance of the "debka." When the excitement reaches its highest pitch, the singing becomes a yell, and "the women join in with their shrill tahlil. The musicians, giving way to the excitement, throw their instruments into the air, and strain their limbs into every contortion, until they fall exhausted to the ground."†

Scenes of similar fanatical excitement may also be witnessed yearly in many Christian churches, and are sometimes carried so far as to endanger the lives of the crowds usually present on such occasions. This is particularly the case at the *so-called* Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, where the fanaticism of the pilgrims reaches such a pitch that "a race-course is made around the sepulchre, and some of them, almost in a state of nudity, dance about with frantic gestures, yelling and screaming as if they were possessed."‡

There are passages in the Old Testament which clearly intimate that the scenes we have described were not unknown

* While we can not deny that we have long and intimately known some howling dervishes who were sincere and honest men, and who, we believe, were often, at their *private* meetings, powerfully influenced by religious fanaticism, such perhaps as is exhibited sometimes in a Western camp-meeting, yet we are sure that the principal characters among them are rogues, and their *public* exhibitions usually frauds. It is in the latter that they pass iron skewers through the skin of their necks, and perform all the tricks of the fire-eater. They also stab themselves with a dagger whose blade springs back into the handle.

† Layard, vol. i., p. 242.

‡ Curzon, p. 183.



Self-torture of Religious Devotee.

to the ancient heathen and even to the Hebrews.* Indeed it would be easy to trace a near resemblance between the dervish associations and the "schools of the prophets," as instituted by Samuel, and continued through the period of the Hebrew monarchy.† But our special object now is to point out the fact that there has always been in the East a connection between the dance and certain phases of religious feeling, to which the Scriptures bear ample witness.‡ This fact must have its foundation in the peculiar temperament of Orientals, else the Shakers and some other sects would have met with better success in introducing it among more Northern races.

The practices of the howling dervishes also illustrate the "cuttings" of the ancient heathen priests, such, for instance, as are described in the graphic account of the scene on Mount Carmel, when the prophet Elijah contended with the prophets of Baal: "They cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and daggers, till the blood gushed out upon them."§ Indeed the language of Jer. xli., 5, seems to imply that the Hebrews sometimes imitated their heathen neighbors in this matter, in connection with the worship of Jehovah, though positively forbidden by their law.‖

Our modern dervishes indulge in these practices only on special occasions, as, for instance, when a procession is organized and proceeds to the suburbs of a town to pray for rain, or for deliverance from some public calamity: they then exhibit some of their fanatical performances, calling upon God, and cutting themselves with knives and swords, so that the blood runs, or piercing their almost naked bodies with wooden or iron spikes, from which they hang small mirrors. They sometimes become so exhausted with pain and loss of blood as to faint away, so that they have to be borne off. We give two drawings, taken from life, among the devotees who figured in a Muslim procession at Shoosha, in Armenia. They were not dervishes, however, but common people carried away by a sim-

* 1 Sam. x., 5, 6; xix., 23, 24. † Stanley, "Jewish Church," vol. i., p. 440.

‡ Exod. xv., 20; 2 Sam. vi., 14, 16; Psa. cxlix., 3.

§ 1 Kings xviii., 28. See an excellent description of the locality and surroundings of this remarkable event in Van de Velde, "Syria and Palestine," vol. i., pp. 322–327.

‖ Lev. xix., 28; Deut. xiv., 1.

ilar impulse, who hoped to render themselves acceptable to God by undergoing these voluntary tortures. One of them cuts his forehead with a sword, so that "the blood gushes out;" he wears a sheet in front to protect his clothes, and his face is covered with clots of blood.

There is yet another religious practice of modern Orientals referred to in the Scriptures: it is that of making pilgrimages to holy places. The Mosaic law required "every male to appear three times a year before the Lord" at Shiloh, and subsequently at Jerusalem. These periods were, in the spring, at the Passover; in early summer, at the Feast of Harvest; and in the autumn, at the Feast of Tabernacles. This practice was not arduous for the inhabitants of so small a land; and its frequency prevented superstition, and brought the people under instruction. It corresponded to the heathen custom of yearly celebrating the festival of their gods, in their most famous temples,* but it looked forward to the time when, the temple being destroyed, God would be worshiped "neither at Jerusalem nor" in any other particular spot.† The East, however, has returned essentially to its old practices. Each Christian church has its special festival in honor of its own particular saint; the most noted, as the Evangelistra of Tinos, the Balookly of Constantinople and others, draw pilgrims from great distances, some of whom come in fulfillment of a vow, others—sometimes even Muslims—in the hope of being cured of a troublesome disease, and all with the certainty of being fleeced of their last penny by the cunning priests. The greatest of these gatherings takes place at Jerusalem, at the Feast of Easter, in the so-called Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where a motley crowd assembles yearly of not less than twenty thousand people of both sexes, who come from every part of the Christian world. We have already spoken of some of the scenes transacted in that spot (see page 764), and might fill a volume with a description of the degrading superstitions, vices, and even crimes there transacted. It is surely a comfort to know that our Holy Lord probably was never on that spot at all, living or dead, and that it is less likely to be the place of his death and burial than that of the hanging and the very grave of Judas Iscariot. Ori-

* Prideaux, vol. i., p. 396.

† John iv., 23.



Muslim Devotee cutting himself like the Prophets of Baal. (1 Kings xviii., 28.)

ental Christians generally believe that it is a man's duty to visit Jerusalem once at least in a lifetime; those of either sex who have done so are thenceforth dignified with the title of "haji" (pilgrim), which becomes as inseparably attached to a name as a D.D. does among us; and they carry through life a distinctive mark tatooed upon the arm by which they may ever be recognized.*

Mohammed introduced pilgrimages into his system, making the Caaba at Mecca, near the western coast of Arabia, the place of gathering. It had been a favorite heathen temple, where the Arab tribes, from time immemorial, collected once a year; he cast out the idols and dedicated it to Allah. The period of this pilgrimage, being appointed in a lunar month, is continually changing by falling back twelve days every year. This is the cause of much inconvenience and even suffering to the pilgrims, who are ill prepared to meet the yearly varying and, therefore, unforeseen hardships of the long and arduous journey, and many of whom perish by the way.† Still no less than eighty thousand people usually assemble annually upon the sacred spot, and there were nearly three times that number two hundred years ago.‡ They come from the forest depths of Africa, from the high regions of Central Asia, from fertile India, and from the islands of the ocean, bringing the productions of their respective lands to the great fair which is held simultaneously with the religious festivities. Before they leave home, they arrange their worldly affairs, and pay their debts, as if they expected never to return. When, however, they have the good fortune to do so, the entire population of their native town turns out to meet and welcome the favored hajis, and conduct them home rejoicing. Thenceforth they bear the honorable surname so hardly earned, and are venerated by their townsmen on account of the religious duty they have successfully performed, as well as for the superior wisdom and experience they are supposed to have acquired in their travels.

The Muslims also perform pilgrimages to the shrines of their holy men. This is practiced most by the Persians, who are Sheites and do not go to Mecca, but chiefly resort to the tomb of the Imam Hosein, at Kerbelah, and of Fatimah, at Meshed.

* Rev. xiii., 16. † Thevenot, part i., p. 150. ‡ Ibid., p. 157.

The Yezidies perform pilgrimages to the shrine of Sheikh Adi, and the Koords, Kuzulbashes, and Turkmens to their principal tekkehs, or chapels, where there are usually one or more venerated graves. For all these there is a particular day appointed wherein the visit is specially meritorious and beneficial.

Orientals continue to believe, as of old, in supernatural agencies, not only in the all-pervading and all-controlling providence and personal influence of the Deity, which they have ever pushed to extreme fatalism, but also in the existence and activity, either for good or for evil, of spirits and invisible beings, who people the air.* What to us are the absurd fables of the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments" are to most Orientals glimpses into an invisible world and living realities. This is still the style of narrative which affords them the most absorbing delight. The stars are believed, especially in Persia, to exert a powerful influence upon the destinies of men; hence the king, the royal princes, the chief ministers of state, and men of wealth and position, often keep an astrologer in their pay, whose duty it is to calculate the most auspicious moment for commencing any important undertaking, to cast the horoscope of a new-born son and heir, etc.† This superstition originated in Chaldea, and was there reduced to a system;‡ and though it is met with in all parts of Western Asia, yet the Persians are more particularly addicted to it.§ The belief is quite general in the East that there exists a class of beings whom they call "Jins," both male and female, good and bad, which hold an intermediate position between angels and men, were created before the latter, are made of fire, or perhaps of gas, and are capable of assuming a variety of forms, or of becoming invisible at pleasure. They eat, drink, and marry—sometimes human beings—as well as die, though they live several centuries. Many events are accounted for in the East by the agency of the Jins; so that they do not exist in stories alone, but are recognized as active agents in human affairs.‖

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* 2 Kings vi., 17; Job i., 6–12; ii., 1–6; Heb. i., 14.

† "Arabian Nights," p. 343. ‡ Matt. ii., 1, 2.

§ Morier, "First Journey," pp. 69, 73, 291; "Second Journey," pp. 40, 93, 103, 106, 164, 388, 389.

‖ Job iv., 15; Matt. xiv., 26. Information on witchcraft and spiritualism on Mount Lebanon will be found in Churchill, "Lebanon," vol. i., p. 166.

Orientals believe in charms, spells, and talismans, chiefly consisting of the names of certain saints, or Jins, or of fanciful and senseless formulas, written upon a piece of paper or parchment. This is kept in a case of silver or gold, or more commonly sewed up in a small cloth bag, an inch long, and hung round the neck, or fastened to the leathern girdle which every Bedawy wears about his waist next to the skin. They have great dread of the "evil eye." Envy or jealousy are believed to endow a single glance with a deadly venom; and some persons, it is thought, thus inflict injury quite unintentionally. It is certainly a very annoying superstition, to say the least. Upon the walls of a new house must be written in large characters, in some conspicuous place, the word "Mashallah" (Praise be to God), lest a glance of admiration doom it to the flames, or bring a blight upon its inmates. If a pretty child is noticed, it must be spit upon at once to save its life. In Cairo the children of the wealthy are kept dirty and in rags, for no other reason than to prevent their being admired.* The dread of the evil eye exists among all classes and in every religious sect; and though no direct allusion to it occurs in the Scriptures, it can not be doubted that it generally prevailed among the Hebrews, as well as among their heathen neighbors.† Indeed some of the Mosaic precepts are best explained by supposing that they were chiefly intended to counteract such a superstition.‡

* Lane, vol. i., p. 70.

† Wilkinson, vol. ii., chap. x., p. 372.

‡ Deut. vi., 8: xi., 20.

CHAPTER XII.

COMMERCE, AND THE MECHANIC ARTS.

THE comparison we have drawn between the ancient and the modern condition of Western Asia, with a view to illustrate and explain some of the pages of Holy Writ, would not be homogeneous and complete did we fail to notice the business intercourse of men, arising from the manufacture of various articles of consumption as needful to civilized society as the direct products of the soil.

Commercial intercourse has probably a more ancient origin than is generally supposed. The human race was early divided into two distinct classes, which still constitute society in the countries it originally occupied, and whence mankind have spread over the whole earth.* These are the dwellers in tents —keepers of flocks and herds, and the dwellers in houses—tillers of the soil† (see page 398). The two classes are mutually dependent, and in the constant exchange of the products of each originally consisted all the commerce of mankind.

We must not imagine the nomads of Western Asia and Northern Africa to be half-naked savages, clad in the skins of animals, like the North American Indians, and with them equally hostile to civilization. Far from it. The wandering Arab, Turkmen, and Koord are as civilized, well-dressed, and polite as the Turk, the Raya, or the Fellah. Both classes buy and sell, the one to the other. There is more lawlessness on the mountains and in the Desert, simply because it can be practiced with greater impunity. Intermarriages are of frequent occurrence, and social intercourse is unrestrained.‡

It would, however, argue a very primitive state of society to suppose that traffic is confined to the two classes we have mentioned. The nomads have no commerce whatever among themselves; no shop is ever set up in their camps for the sale of

* Gen. ix., 19. † Gen. iv., 2, 20. ‡ Gen. xxxiii., 18, 19; xxxiv., 1, 6, 9, 10.

the simplest article of wearing apparel. Their flocks and herds afford them food, while their wives and daughters weave their tent-cloths of goats' hair and their most necessary garments, as well as carpets of wool or camels' hair. Whatever they may need more than these, such as cooking utensils, weapons, ornaments for their women, their better clothing, and other articles of luxury, are obtained in the nearest market-towns in exchange for cheese, dates, locusts, sheep, goats, cattle, boards, beams, charcoal, sackcloth, or carpets. The life of the villagers is similar to that of the nomads, except that the former are stationary, and subsist on the products of the soil; they raise cereals, vegetables, and fruits, cultivate the vine and the olive, and produce silk. In some mountainous districts saw-mills are occasionally met with, which supply the wants of the neighboring regions; flour mills are also very common wherever there is a sufficient supply of water. All these branches of industry, excepting the production of silk, are of extremely ancient origin. We have seen a saw, taken out of a very ancient tomb;* and the use of the instrument was familiar to the Hebrews,† even as applied to the cutting of stones, which is still practiced in all parts of the country.‡ And these people carry the products of their industry, as of old, upon asses, mules, horses, or camels, to the nearest market-town, and supply their own wants in exchange.§ When the village is of a considerable size, the first shop set up in it is sure to be the bakal, or grocer's stall, where are sold the plainest articles of food for the passing traveler—bread, cheese, olives, salt fish, and dried fruits, as well as whatever is most likely to be called for by the farmer—vessels of wood, iron, or earthenware, of which the shopkeeper obtains a small supply in some neighboring town. Most of this business is carried on by exchange, the farmers paying for their purchases with the produce of their farm or flocks, which the shop-keeper sells in town, or retails to travelers, who always pay in coin.

As the village increases in size and wealth other shops are added. If the place is near a thoroughfare, a blacksmith's and farrier's shop (nalbant) are next set up; then a coffee-shop, a

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* Wilkinson, vol. ii., p. 118, fig. 398, 1.

† Isa. x., 15.

‡ 1 Kings vii., 9.

§ Neh. xiii., 15, 19.

cobbler's and saddler's, a butcher's, and a baker's stall, a variety store, and so on. It will be noticed in this enumeration that commerce and manufactures go hand in hand. The first step consists, indeed, of the mere exchange of natural products; but the peddler, who often anticipates even this, goes from village to village, bearing his own pack, or driving his laden donkey before him, and he does not fail to provide himself with articles of manufacture; while the shops, which rise, one after another, in the growing town by no means contain the products of other men's industry alone: the entire display is often the shop-keeper's own work; and he may be seen alternately busy with his trade and waiting upon his customers.

Oriental shops or stores are nearly all built after the same pattern, the points of difference between them—not always discernible from the street—consisting chiefly in the depth of the structure, and the form of the inner part, occupied as a workshop or for storing surplus goods. The portion which appears upon the street commonly consists of a platform about two feet high, which occupies the entire front of the shop, usually not over ten feet wide: a small door leads to a room at the back. The rest of the wall is covered with shelves, upon which are displayed the merchant's goods in the most attractive form, the richest and handsomest articles being spread out and suspended on cords and rods. The platform itself is usually covered with a small carpet (sejadeh), or a thin mattress with a cushion or two. There sits the shop-keeper, cross-legged, his account-books close at hand, into which he peers from time to time and notes down items, or keeps himself otherwise busy; nor does he forget to address the passers-by, and invite them to inspect his goods. Presently a customer stops and seats himself on the edge of the platform; the merchant takes down whatever is called for, and spreads it before him. He is frequently offered coffee and a pipe from the nearest *café*, whose master keeps an open account with all the neighboring stores. Young women, whether married or not, are never permitted to go shopping in the East, being thus deprived of one of the dearest privileges of our Western ladies. This is considered proper only for the aged. The shop is closed at night by means of boards, which entirely cover the shelves; they are strengthened with iron bars and padlocked: a portion of them

serve as an awning during the day. The accompanying illustration from Lane (vol. ii., p. 12) will give the reader a correct idea of the front part of a shop; it is rather narrower than is usual, however, and for this reason, probably, the back part of it is not separated into a distinct room, which is more frequently the case.



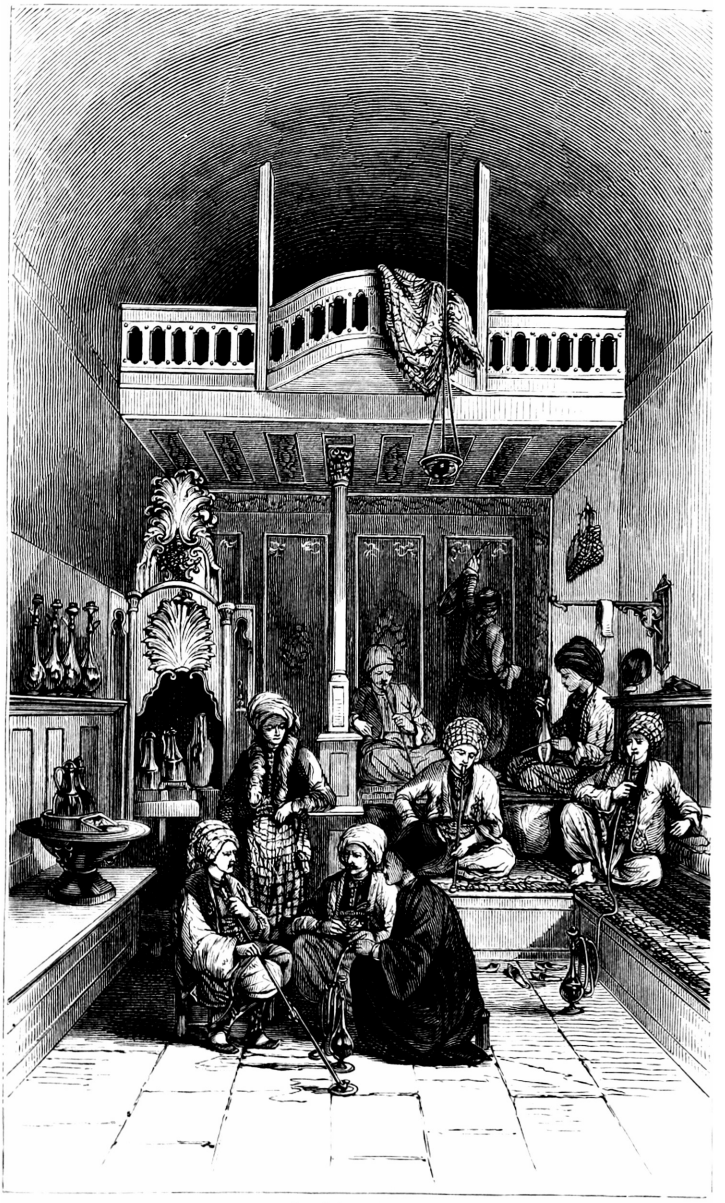
Merchant's Shop in Cairo.

Some stores, however, consist of a room, with a door and windows upon the street; but there is often a narrow platform on the outside even of these for the display of goods. Such are the shops of the *shekerjies* and *helvajies*, the manufacturers of several varieties of sweetmeats and confectionery. The baker's shop, already pictured (page 89), may serve as a specimen of this class; the bread and pastry, hot from the oven, are exposed for sale upon the counter in front. Somewhat similar is the butcher's stall, which is hung round with the bodies of sheep, suspended from hooks. The *café* (more properly *kahweh*) is a nearer approach to Western ideas, and deserves a passing notice, being an important institution of the East. It consists of a room furnished with benches fixed in

the walls, and a few low stools. In one corner, on a raised fire-place, coffee is ever simmering in a copper pot. Long wooden pipes are set horizontally upon a rack on the wall, and smoking bottles (*argileh*) stand in a row upon a shelf. This is the general place of resort for the men: women are excluded. Here, on his way to his business or his shop, every man takes his morning sip of coffee, and fills a pipe with his own tobacco from a bag which he takes from his bosom. It costs him just half a cent. Here friends meet by appointment, to have a chat. This, too, is the Bourse of the town, where merchants gather to transact business; and here, outside of the door, the workmen who seek employment often sit on little stools, or upon the ground, waiting to be hired for a day's work in the vineyard or the field.* Within the coffee-shop there is sometimes a gallery, accessible by a narrow staircase, whither guests may retire and order refreshments, or even a full meal from a cooking establishment in the neighborhood, or from a passing *mohalebijy*. The café has spread far and wide throughout the East. It not only takes its place among the other shops of the town as part and parcel of the system of business and commercial transactions, but even encroaches upon the quarters set apart for family residences; it particularly selects the most picturesque sites, especially such as combine the beauties of nature with the ever-varying movements of a sea-port or a thoroughfare. Such a spot is the paradise of the Oriental, where he dreams and builds castles in the air, under the inspiration of his favorite narcotics, coffee and tobacco, enhanced, perhaps, by the dreamy thrumming of the mandolin or saz, accompanied by a plaintive Oriental air. The café may also be found upon the high-road, offering a momentary refreshment to the weary traveler, or affording him a resting-place for the night.

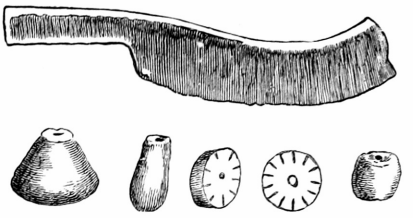
The barber's shop is constructed like the café. It can be distinguished only by the razors and strops on the wall, and by a coarse cloth hung at the window, displaying, in a grim style of embroidery set off by large blue beads, the many teeth which the owner has had the honor to extract from his customers' jaws. The razor of the ancients was precisely like that of

* Matt. xx., 3.



An Oriental Café.

the moderns, as may be seen in the accompanying sketch of one found in a very old tomb; there were with it a number of beads, apparently made of bone. The barber in Turkey is the ordinary surgeon, doing the bleeding, cupping, and tooth-pulling, while the apothecary administers the drugs. These two also prescribe for the patients: they disdain to put themselves under the orders or to follow the prescriptions of the doctor. There is, indeed, no room left for the latter personage. According to the ideas of the country, a mere consultation is never paid for, but simply the drugs furnished to the patients.



Ancient Razor-blade and Beads. (Numb. vi., 5.)

The shops and stores we have described cluster together in some convenient part of the town, and, in the larger cities, in several distinct quarters, for the greater convenience of the inhabitants. Each group of shops is called a market (Arabic, *sook;* Greek, **αγορα**; Turkish, *charshy;* Armenian, *shooga*),* and is intended to supply the principal wants of the immediate neighborhood, being almost exclusively limited to the sale of articles of food. There is not a town of any considerable size, however, that is not provided with a bazar, or bezesten, more or less complete; and this is so peculiarly an Oriental institution—one, moreover, of which there are such distinct intimations in the Scriptures and contemporary writings—that it requires a brief description, as it may now be seen in Constantinople, Damascus, Cairo, and Bagdad, and anciently existed in Jerusalem, Memphis, and Babylon.

A particular portion of the city, varying in size according to the necessities of the case, is exclusively devoted to purposes of trade. This space is cut up into narrow streets, each of which consists of a fire-proof stone building, open at both ends, with the street running through it covered by an arched roof, pierced with windows to let in the light; this street is lined on both sides with shops of little depth, such as we have

* Ezek. xxvii., 13; Luke vii., 32.



Street in the Bazar at Cairo. (Ezek. xxvii., 13.)

already described. Merchants dealing in similar goods find it for their advantage as well as for that of their customers to cluster together; hence each of these covered streets is usually exclusively occupied by a particular trade, and is accordingly called the dry-goods bazar, the shoe bazar, etc. This was also the case anciently, for Josephus speaks of the place "at Jerusalem" where were "the merchants of wool, the braziers, and the market for cloth."*

As a general rule the most-valuable goods occupy the most solid structures, which are closed at each end at night. Such strong buildings are apt to be erected side by side, though this is not always the case, and then all the issues being closed with heavy iron doors, the whole forms a sort of fortress, capable of resisting a siege or an outside conflagration, though by no means proof against an earthquake. No one is allowed to remain within but the watchmen and the dogs. The gates are

* Josephus, "Jewish War," bk. v., chap. viii., § 1.

shut at evening at an early hour, and belated merchants must make their exit through the little door kept open for that purpose (see page 453). But the whole bazar is by no means so solidly built. Around these stone structures spreads out a far more extensive net-work of streets, the continuation and ramification of those in the central bezesten, covered over simply with wood-work, or with an awning, and, still farther on, left open overhead; each shop, however, being protected against rain or sunshine by a projecting roof. This part of the sook is not provided with gates. Many of the owners live in the upper story of their shops, and the whole is under the special surveillance of the police. The khans, occupied by merchants and workmen from abroad—called bekiars (bachelors), because, having left their families at home, they lead a *bachelor's* life—are mostly situated in this part of the sook, for the purpose of being near the place of business. Indeed, not a few of these buildings are used as shops for the sale of foreign goods, or even for manufacturing purposes. They are generally square in shape, with a single broad entrance, closed at night by an iron door, which itself is sometimes provided with a little door in one of its folds. The interior consists of a central court with a double gallery, or veranda, upon which open two stories of rooms, each supplied with a door and a window upon the gallery, and another window at the back.

Having described the bazar with its streets of shops, containing within the narrowest convenient limits all the products of the soil and the manufactures of the province, or even of the whole empire as well as of foreign lands, with the exception of articles too bulky to be thus stored, which are laid up in distinct portions of the town, we may now pass on to consider the state of the mechanic arts. And here it is evident that the great and mighty political changes, whose shifting scenes have rapidly followed each other in the East, could not fail to exert a deleterious influence upon human industry. We see how even modern European warfare causes every loom and wheel to stand still, and paralyzes all branches of labor. This is the case to a much greater degree where the strong-limbed artisan is forcibly dragged into the battle-field, and where the victor puts every male to the sword, or at least gives up the conquered city to be sacked and pillaged, as a part of the soldiers' pay.

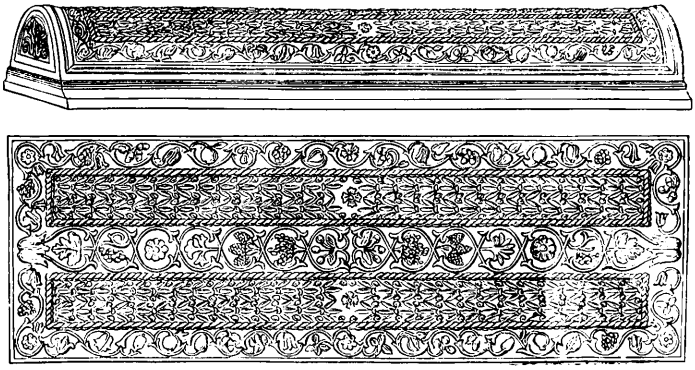
Moreover, when invading nations or races settle in a vanquished land, as has often occurred in Western Asia, they are very apt to despise and discourage the native manufactures, and to introduce and patronize those to which they were accustomed in their former home. It would not, therefore, be surprising to discover that every vestige of ancient art had disappeared, and that not a trace of it could be seen in the industrial products of the moderns. This, however, is not the case.

Independently of these general considerations, there are three causes that have conspired to produce a change in these matters, which we here notice, not so much for the purpose of accounting for the notable differences between ancient and modern art and industry, as in order to define more clearly wherein these differences consist:

I. The religion of the ancients encouraged the imitation of animated nature, and no expense was spared, whether in material or in workmanship, in order to make the images of the gods the embodiment of the highest conception of physical beauty or grandeur. The Greeks of Asia Minor particularly excelled in this art, and surpassed even their own countrymen of Europe.* The effect was very noticeable: the gifts presented to the heathen temples chiefly consisted of the works of genius, whether in sculpture or painting. The public buildings were ornamented with historical friezes, statues, and paintings. The fine arts adorned the houses of the rich, and the poor obtained cheap but tasteful imitations in baked clay. No one can visit the Pompeii and Herculaneum departments of the museum at Naples without being struck with the extent to which the fine arts were cultivated by the ancients. In Western Asia Minor, at the sites of the old cities, the soil teems with fragments of clay—images, lamps, marble statues, mosaic pavements, or painted stucco. The public monuments, as well as household effects of ancient Egypt and Assyria, produce the impression that they too were eminently an artistic people. We draw the same conclusion from the fact that they stamped upon their coins carefully drawn images of their gods or sovereigns, and of the emblems of their state, instead of the rude pieces of precious metal so long current in other lands.

* Gillies, "Greece," chap. xiv.

The Hebrews were not forbidden the *making*, but only the religious use, of images. Indeed, representations of animated creatures were carved by special divine command.* We have reason to suppose, however, that devout Jews abstained from the making of images on account of the propensity of that age to the sin of idolatry, but that, on the other hand, they might strongly incline to the imitation of inanimate objects. Accordingly we find that Solomon adorned the Temple with carvings of trees, fruit, and flowers.† Had not the hand of war so ruthlessly passed over that sacred land, we might have had more specimens of Hebrew ornamental carving, and could compare them with similar works of the modern Muslims, who likewise eschew all representations of living creatures. Unfortunately, nearly all these monuments are in a more or less



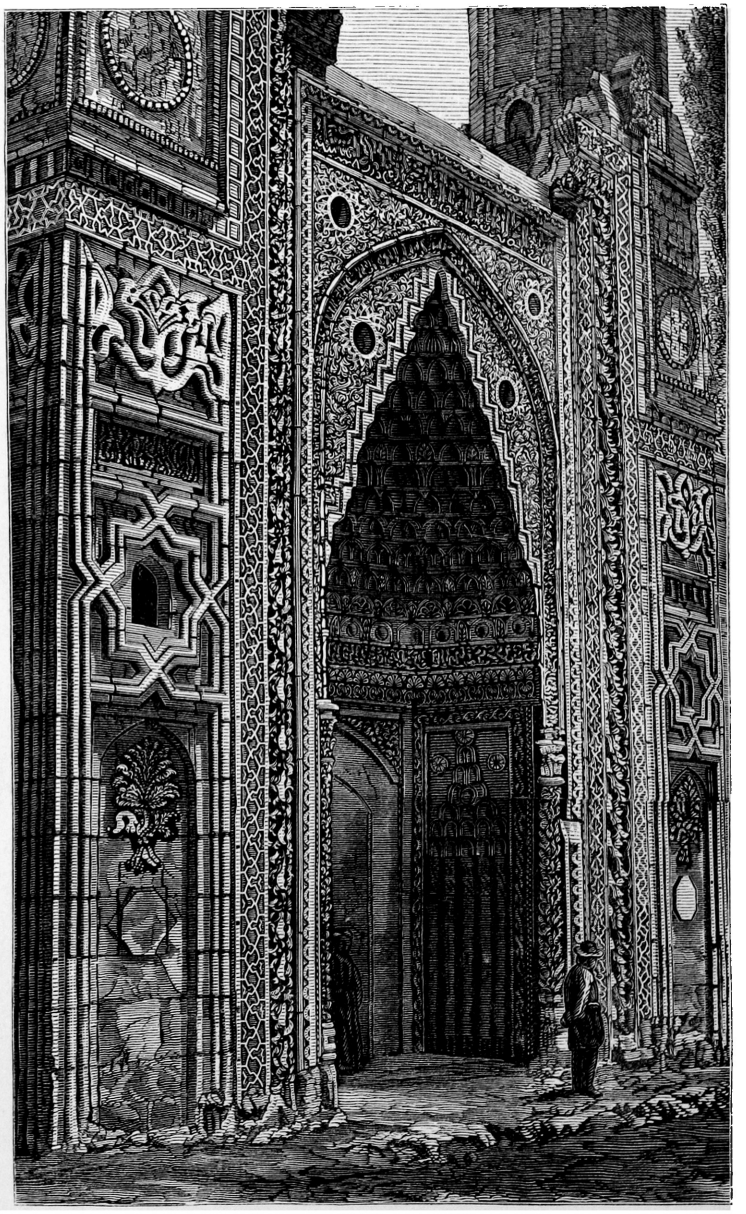
Lid of Sarcophagus. From the Tombs of the Kings of Judah.

shattered condition. But there still exists one at least in a fair state of preservation as well as of undoubted antiquity; it is the lid of a sarcophagus, found in an artificial cavern near Jerusalem, called by the Arabs Kaboor el Melook (the sepulchres of the kings). This "lid," now at the Louvre, in Paris, exhibits a graceful carving of "flowers, fruit, and leaves, among which may be distinguished the iris, grapes, pomegranates, gourds, almonds, acorns, and anemones." There are also double rows of olive-leaves and fruit. This sarcophagus cover (of which we give a picture), is supposed by Mr. De Saulcy,

* Exod. xxv., 18; Numb. xxi., 9; 1 Kings vii., 25, 29. † 1 Kings vii., 18-20.

who brought it to France, to have been made by Solomon for his father, David. However this may be, there is no doubt that its date is anterior to the captivity, and is probably not much below one thousand years B.C.

It must be acknowledged that the religions which have prevailed in the East for the last eighteen centuries have not given much encouragement to the arts of sculpture and painting. Christianity, indeed, merely abstained from introducing them into its churches. Constantinople, its Eastern metropolis, became a museum filled with the productions of the heathen artists, whose talent was tolerated for the purpose of honoring civic or military pre-eminence; but the idols of the dying superstition were pursued with unrelenting fury, and not a vestige of them was left to tell the follies of a by-gone age. When Islam appeared, in the seventh century, it declared deadly war against images of all kinds, whether painted or carved, and swept through the land, shattering and mutilating the remains of ancient art. The Muslims have made it unsafe for the Christians among them to indulge any desire to imitate living nature, and have always persecuted them for keeping pictures of saints in their churches, which they persist in calling "the temples of idols." Still there is occasionally, even among themselves, a cropping out of artistic propensities which is usually let alone. Some of the buildings which belong to the period of the Saracens are adorned with carvings of lions, a favorite emblem with that martial people. Such is the celebrated "Fountain of the Lions" in the Alhambra, at Granada. The Persians are less strict on this point than the sect of the Sunnis. The shah's throne is adorned with representations of men, women, lions, and birds (page 642), and on the walls of his palaces are painted battle and hunting scenes, as on those of Persepolis and Nineveh. Every one is familiar with the little boxes, pen-cases, etc., which come from Persia, and are adorned with miniature pictures of hunts and portraits of men and women; and even among the Sunnis the café and the barber's shop seem to enjoy a special license for the exhibition of such rude sketches of human beings as the people are yet capable of producing. It is evident, however, that nearly all the taste and talent of the East for ornamental picturing has abandoned the imitation of nature's animated models, and con-



Gate-way of Medreseh, at Sivas.

fines itself to the representation of trees, fruits, and flowers, as with the ancient Hebrews, or, still more, to the working out of ingenious and intricate patterns combining natural objects with Arabic characters. This may be seen in their beautiful jewelry, whether in filigree or otherwise, of which we have already given some specimens (page 594). It is also noticeable in their architecture, whether it be gorgeously painted ceilings and walls, or finely carved tombs and mosks. Having already given a specimen of ancient *Hebrew* ornamental carving, we now reproduce a sample of *Muslim* work of the same general style for the purpose of comparison. It is the door-way, or entrance of a medreseh, or college, at Sivas, in Asia Minor, and dates back to the Saracenic period and the twelfth century.

II. There is another change, unconnected with any religious ideas, which must not be forgotten when we compare the industrial products of the ancients with those of the moderns. The world is improving in a material sense even in the East, and among the most important signs of progress is the discovery and extensive use of cotton and silk. The cultivation of the former now furnishes a livelihood to millions of human beings, mostly in Egypt and Southern Asia Minor, while the production and manufacture of silk employs a still greater number in Syria and in Northern Asia Minor. Wool is probably used almost as much as anciently, but linen fabrics have greatly deteriorated, the article being now in little use even among the rich, who prefer silk. It is now raised chiefly for exportation. It would be an interesting question, but one which we confess ourselves quite incompetent to discuss, whether the change of apparel, and especially the exchange of an animal for a vegetable substance as an article of dress, has exerted any influence upon the physical condition or character of the people. It is certainly much easier to perceive the effects of the present all but universal use of narcotics, which have been introduced within the last three hundred years.

III. But the source of the greatest changes in the industry and arts of Bible lands must be looked for not in the religious or political condition of *their own* people, but in the influence exerted upon them by their *neighbors* of the continent of Europe. A severe blow was struck at their commercial prosperity by the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope, which de-

prived them of the carrying trade between Eastern Asia and Europe, the source of untold wealth to Babylon, Jerusalem, and Alexandria successively. Europe long acknowledged the supremacy of Asia in arts, science, and arms. It was only fifty years ago that the charm was fully dispelled by the wars of the Greek revolution, when the naval power of Turkey was annihilated at the battle of Navarino, and a Russian army encamped on the Bosphorus. The triumph of the West opened a wide door for European manufactures, which were sold cheaper than the native products, because they paid a lighter duty. Time wore on, and the introduction of steam as the great motive-power cheapened still more the manufactures of Europe, and no "protective tariff" being allowed by the powers, which styled themselves "the Protectors of Turkey," the native fabrics were withdrawn from market, and gradually disappeared. Only thirty years ago there were yet a score of khans in Broosa, each of whose rooms contained a loom employed in weaving the celebrated silk fabrics to which that city gave its name. Instead of these, there are now three or four factories under European patronage, which produce only a light and flimsy gauze. Manufacturing industry is confined chiefly to articles too bulky or too cheap to be brought from Europe. Almost every thing of value or of artistic worth—jewelry and the like—is either imported, was made at least fifty years ago, or belongs to a style or class of work not yet imitated by Europeans. The *exports* of the country now consist mostly of raw material, and the *imports* of manufactures. In many cases this raw material is exported to be manufactured in Europe, and returned to the East, all at the expense of the Oriental consumer.

The circumstances explained in the foregoing paragraphs will serve to account for the deterioration so perceptible in the mechanic arts of Western Asia, even during the last century. Nevertheless, there are yet many striking points of resemblance in these matters between the ancient and the modern East, distinguishing them from our own civilization, and well deserving our attention. These we shall now briefly notice, and thus conclude this part of our subject.

There is not, nor has there ever been, any thing like caste in this part of the world, yet it is observable that, both now

and anciently, certain trades and occupations have always been carried on by particular races, classes, or families: certain manufactures are monopolized by distinct classes of the people. Solomon's chief artist in making the ornamental works of the Temple was Hiram, a descendant of the Danite Aholiab, who did the same work in the wilderness,* and he had learned his trade from his own father, who had practiced it in Tyre, his native city. So now the various arts and trades are monopolies, and their secrets are rarely revealed to any but the children and near relations of those who are already initiated. This has given rise in the large cities to the *guilds* so common in Europe in the Middle Ages, which are associations of members of the same trade, who combine to defend their mutual interests, act in accordance with rules adopted by common consent, and particularly seek to keep out intruders, and maintain a high standard of workmanship. Such plans are the more easily carried out because the shops of each particular trade cluster together in one bazar. This explains the circumstances attending the tumult raised at Ephesus by the makers of Diana's silver shrines. Demetrius was probably the vakil (representative) of his guild; for one of the best workmen, an experienced man, and ready speaker, is usually chosen to that office.†

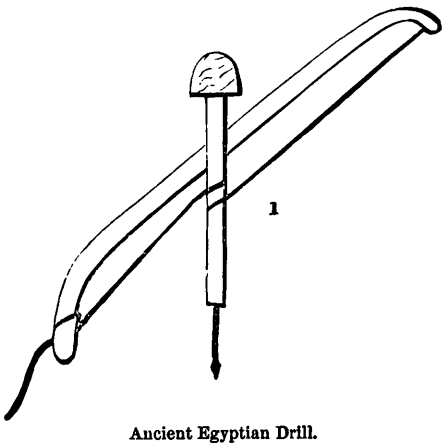
Among the Hebrews the Gibeonites were the "hewers of wood and drawers of water."‡ At Constantinople water is supplied to all the houses by Armenian Christian sakkas, who convey it in large leather bags suspended from the shoulder; and no one belonging to any other nation would venture to infringe upon the monopoly. They are also the porters of the capital. But the trade in charcoal and wood is in the hands of Turks, who alone hew the latter. The celebrated Smyrna porters are all Turks from Konieh (Iconium), and the business is confined to certain families, whose children are trained to it from childhood. Instances might be mentioned of cities where the same manufactures have been carried on from time immemorial. A case is mentioned by Pococke, which at once illustrates this tenacity and the changes produced by the prog-

* Exod. xxxv., 34; Stanley, "Jewish Church," vol. ii., p. 227.

† Acts xix., 24–27. ‡ Josh. ix., 21.

ress of human society: the town of Akraim, in Egypt, is the ancient "Panopolis," famous of old for its linen manufactures;* at present they make coarse cottons there.†

Again, we are able in many cases to compare the tools used by the ancients with those of the moderns, and it is a curious fact that they are so much alike, and that both differ in the same respects from those of the West. Our drill takes the form of a "brace and bits;" but Orientals use a bow which causes the drill to revolve, one end turning in a nut held with the left hand, while the right draws the bow forward and backward. We could make no better picture of this instrument than we find in Wilkinson, who copied his from the sculptures of ancient Thebes. Moreover, if we compare the tools and appliances of the modern mason and carpenter with the pictures on the ancient monuments, or with such tools as have survived the wear of ages, we find no essential difference between them. The only saw the ancients seem to have used is a plain handsaw,‡ and it was held precisely as at present, and seems to have had its teeth as they are now, turned in the opposite direction from ours, so as to cut by pulling, and not by shoving. But the adze is the chief tool of the modern carpenter and joiner, with which he does every conceivable thing, being never seen without it, either clinging to his shoulder or stuck into his belt; and a similar instrument seems to have been as great a favorite, and to have been used in the same manner, in ancient Egypt.§

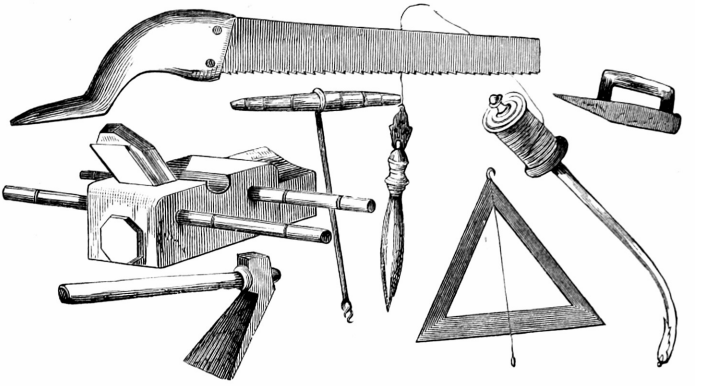


Ancient Egyptian Drill.

We conclude, from the modern tools so closely resembling the ancient, so far as we are able to ascertain, that we are war-

* Strabo, lib. xvii., chap. i., § 41.
† Pococke, vol. i., chap. ii., p. 76.
‡ Wilkinson, vol. ii., p. 118, fig. 398, 1.
§ Ibid., fig. 398, 2.

ranted in supposing the former to be correct illustrations of the latter. The accompanying cut contains the chief instruments now in use by carpenters and masons. They consist of saws, planes, adzes, gimlets, triangular levels, lines, plummets, and trowels. If the tools used by the ancients are similar to



Modern Carpenters' and Masons' Tools.

those of the moderns, the manner of employing them is equally so. They have no carpenter's bench, nor screws, nor any of the many appliances, models, forms, and other knickknacks which fill our shops. The man sits down upon the floor and makes that his bench. He employs four hands instead of the two of ordinary humanity, for his feet are bare, and his toes are trained to do almost as effectual service as other men's fingers. It is wonderful to see how a board is held with the toes and turned about, while the hands are engaged in sawing or otherwise fashioning it. We have never seen these men at work without being riveted to the spot, and reflecting that the capabilities and powers of the human foot are quite unknown to our higher civilization. The resemblance between the ancient and the modern processes may be distinctly traced in the various operations connected with the other trades, which are graphically pictured upon the Egyptian monuments, such as the manufacture of pottery, rope-making, and the fuller's business.* Nor does there seem to be much difference in the products of their industry, as far as we may judge from what has

* Wilkinson, vol. ii., pp., 89, 106, 108.

resisted the influence of time. Both ancients and moderns were equally successful in veneering, inlaying, and enameling, while articles of jewelry are often so similar in form or style that it is difficult to tell them apart.

As to work in cloth and weaving, the modern and the ancient Egyptians push the woof downward.* The embroidery of the East is still celebrated. The Smyrna edging, with other styles of lace-work, are sought by the merchant, while embroidery in wool, and still more in silk, imitating flowers in their natural colors, is extremely beautiful, but rarely leaves the country.† The carpets of Ooshak, in Asia Minor, and those made by the Koords and the Persians, are quite as much esteemed as those anciently sold at Babylon.‡

Western Asia is celebrated for its drugs and dyes, which have never failed to attract particular attention at the "Universal Expositions" in which they have been displayed. Some of these appear to be particularly alluded to in connection with the erection of the tabernacle in the wilderness and the establishment of the Mosaic ritual. The "blue" there spoken of appears to be wool dyed with indigo, a color so common as to be used for the garments of the lower classes through the entire country.§ Scarlet is still obtained from the madder-root, which is sown in trenches, left to grow for three years, and then dug partially up year after year. It is an important article of commerce, and as fast a color as is known in the East, where it goes by the name of kirmiz (crimson). "Gold" (in Exod. xxxix., 22) is gold-thread and gold-foil, which are still greatly used by the rich, either woven into the cloth or embroidered upon their garments.‖

There has been a good deal of obscurity and doubt respecting the measures of length used by the ancients, chiefly on account of the evidently varying sizes of the cubit, not only in

* Wilkinson, vol. ii., p. 85.

† Exod. xxxix., 3, 5, 24, 29.

‡ Layard, vol. ii., p. 315.

§ Exod. xxviii., 5, 6.

‖ During the last century it was fashionable for Turkish ladies to wear dresses containing a great deal of *silver*-thread, which is still done, but to a less extent. European ladies living in the East could not then conveniently dress in any other than the native costume, and the writer's grandmother, after wearing such dresses the greater part of her life, finally laid them aside for the garments of Europe. She had the silver-thread of her Turkish dresses melted down, and made into a sugar-basin, which is still preserved in the family as an interesting heir-loom.

different countries, but even in the same country, as applied to different classes of objects. A similar perplexity has been complained of by modern travelers with regard to the *endazeh*, or *pik*, which is of three different sizes, *i. e.*, the Constantinople pik of 26½ inches, the land endazeh of 24$\frac{9}{12}$ inches, and the Egyptian, of 22 inches. All these, like the cubit, are measured from the elbow to the end of the fingers; but, as the arm varies in size, iron rods have been substituted, which may be intended to correspond to the different average sizes of people's arms in the several provinces, the Egyptians being the shortest race, while the inhabitants of Asia Minor are the tallest. Our own measures were originally based upon parts of the human body, viz., the thumb and the foot, but their indefinite character caused them long ago to be replaced by an arbitrary foot-measure, which is kept in the Tower of London. In the East the measures commonly used are: One finger (*i. e.*, the finger-breadth) up to four;* the hand-breadth, which includes the thumb;† the span;‡ and the endazeh (cubit), as already explained. All these are commonly measured with the hand or arm; yet merchants, carpenters, and masons are usually provided with wooden or iron standard endazehs, which vary in size, as we have explained, and are apt to be made a little longer or shorter as best suits the interests of the owner.

We have briefly described the present manufactures of the East, and must now locate their workshops and other industrial establishments. They can not be set up outside of the cities, in the open country, as they would there be exposed to the lawless rapine of marauders and highway robbers. The space usually allotted to manufacturing establishments in the towns lies within the general area of business, close to the bazars and khans, whose shops and merchants must be supplied with goods as fast as those on hand are disposed of. There you may see, arrayed in groups, the workmen in such industries as we have already described, as well as the manufacturers of articles in copper, iron, brass, tin, the tent-makers,§ and the manufacturers of shoes and boots, which are made of the fine Turkey morocco prepared in several parts of the country. All these goods are made at the workshops, and are

* Jer. lii., 21. † Exod. xxv., 25. ‡ Exod. xxviii., 16. § Acts xviii., 3.

mostly sold in the bazar. There are also auction sales of second-hand articles conducted in a very different manner from our own: instead of the auctioneer taking the stand and the crowd pressing around him, he walks through the bazar, calling aloud the last offer made, and holding out the article, which every one is allowed to examine. The owner is not obliged to part with it unless he is satisfied with the price offered. Lotteries are quite unknown.

The commercial system of the East can not, however, be fully understood without an allusion to its fairs. These occur in all parts of the country, and are intended to supply every district with such necessaries or comforts of life as it is found convenient to purchase by the quantity at stated periods, rather than to eke out day by day. The merchant, on the other hand, finds it profitable to supply several districts in turn, though he may have to transport his goods for the purpose. This system is so advantageous that it is carried out even within the limits of such cities as are supplied with the best bazars. In Constantinople, for instance, a fair is held every day of the week, in different parts of the city. Booths are set up, shops and stands are extemporized, and so great a throng is gathered, from early dawn till near sunset, as to make it a hard task to pass through. Indeed one of these fairs is held in the bazar itself. It takes possession for one entire day every week of several streets, whose merchants shut up their shops, and yield their places to those from abroad. Another fair has its centre in the yard of the great mosk of the Valideh-sultan, and spreads thence into the adjoining streets. Still another occupies the steep street of Galata, leading down from the tower to the sea, which is thence called "the Street of the Thursday Fair."

The inhabitants of the villages obtain their supplies and dispose of their produce at the fairs held in the neighboring cities. Where no such cities lie near enough for the convenience of the district, the authorities appoint a weekly fair in one of the villages, which is often, from this circumstance, called Pazar (bazar) Keuy (the fair village), where in process of time rise also a few permanent shops. It is to be regretted that these fairs are so generally held on Sunday that the Lord's day has come to be called, in the Turkish language, Pazar Gunu (fair

day). This has been done purposely by the Muslims in order to desecrate the Christian's day of rest and worship, and thus gradually to destroy their religion. The petitions sent to the authorities upon the subject have rarely produced any permanent effect. The people of many districts must starve if they do not purchase their supplies at the fair; nor do the Muslims ever allow Friday, their own sacred day, to be unhallowed in this manner.

But there are fairs which supply the wants of much more extensive regions of country. These may be divided into two classes—the purely secular, and those held in connection with religious ideas and ceremonies. The chief of the former are two—viz., that of Oozoongova, between Adrianople and Philippopoli, in European Turkey, and that of Zileh, in the province of Pontus, in Asia Minor. These correspond to the great fair held yearly at Nijnii Novgorod, in Eastern Russia. Both Oozoongova and Zileh are small towns, insignificant in themselves, the former indeed a miserable little village, occupied only by a few families of farmers. They, however, contain a number of permanent structures, or khans, where the wealthiest merchants take up their quarters. Just before the opening of the fair, light board shops and stores rise up as by enchantment, and the plain is at once covered with street after street of booths, many of them protected from the rain by means of planks which extend across from shop to shop. At Oozoongova the fair is held in October, lasting about a fortnight, and closes in season for merchants to attend at Zileh, where business commences the first week in December. People go to these fairs from all parts of the empire, and, as they usually group themselves, *first*, according to their sectional predilections, and, *secondly*, according to their occupations, the whole thing gives a correct idea of the products of the land. But there are also goods from farther off—from Manchester, Berlin, and Cashmere; the precious stones of the south; and slaves, mostly from Africa, not openly exhibited in the market, but shown to customers in the khans. The most important and heavy transactions occur between the merchants themselves, and business is so brisk, while it lasts, that they are obliged to remain a week after the close of the fair, in order to settle their accounts. Amusement is not wholly neglected on

such occasions; but there is nothing like the shows at our fairs, or at their own festivals; business is too engrossing to allow any time for play. The concourse, however, frequently brings about trials of strength and skill in wrestlings and games of the jerid. The neighborhood of the fair is apt to be infested with highway robbers, who pounce upon the merchant and carry away his goods or his well-filled purse. The authorities usually set up temporary booths and tents on the various roads, and an extra number of policemen and gendarmes are on duty both within the precincts and in all the surrounding region.

It is not at these fairs that the authorities interfere with business, for the articles are of such a nature that their value has to be agreed upon by the merchants themselves, after mutual consultation. The price of food, however, is always and everywhere fixed by the police, who severely punish the slightest infringement. Fruit is sold at the same price when scarce as when plenty, and he who reaches the market first enjoys only the advantage of making the earliest sales. The wrath of the police is specially exercised upon those who sell under weight. They visit the shops from time to time for the purpose of comparing the weights with the standard they carry with them. The punishment inflicted consisted until lately of the bastinado on the bare soles of the feet, or in nailing the culprit's ear to the side-post of his shop-door so high as to oblige him to stand on tiptoe. He is now sent to a filthy under-ground prison.

The sale of any other articles than comestibles, however, is wholly left to the parties concerned. It is ever accompanied by more or less bargaining, and often gives occasion to the display of considerable diplomatic skill. We have a specimen of this in the purchase by Abraham of the Cave of Machpelah, with the adjoining field and trees.* Considering the high relative value of money in those days, Ephron the Hittite, taking advantage of the patriarch's affliction, made an excellent bargain by obtaining from him the sum of two hundred and thirty dollars for the property. But matters are not always concluded in so gentle a style. Sometimes there are even high

* Gen. xxiii., 3–18.

words, and generally a show of withdrawing in disgust, which is sure to bring the other party to terms. At the fairs, however, very little coin is handled, except in the small retail business; most of the transactions consisting of exchanges, sometimes in quite a roundabout way. It was doubtless so anciently. Indeed there was a time when in those very countries the precious metals were unknown as a medium of exchange; and there are now retired mountainous districts where the only coins ever seen by the villagers are those worn by their wives and daughters on their caps or around their necks. It would seem that the first medium of exchange consisted of cattle;* yet they could have been used only for the purchase of valuable articles. It is probable that sheep were also employed in the same manner:† we often hear, even now, in the East of purchases being made for so many sheep—not goats, for they are not so salable. Slaves are now used as currency only in Africa.‡ The most ancient gold and silver coins were in the form of rings, which had to be weighed in order to ascertain their value.§ They seem to have been in use in the time of Job, each of whose friends gave him a ring of gold, not a golden finger-ring, or ear-ring;‖ while "the piece of money" must have been a piece of silver, or, as the old versions have it—which seems, on many accounts, most probable—"they each gave him also a sheep."

The ancient coins of Western Asia were celebrated for their purity, particularly those made in Persia, and called "darics."¶ This is also the case with many modern coins struck before the present century, during which base metal, consisting of copper and tin washed with silver, has been circulated by the Government at an arbitrary valuation. Each successive sovereign strikes coins of different sizes and denominations, which are laid up and worn as ornaments by the women until necessity compels them to part with them; hence there are constantly brought into the market a great variety of coins, mostly of gold, whose real value it is extremely difficult to ascertain, es-

* Gillies, "Greece," vol. i., p. 11. Denham and Clapperton (vol. ii., p. 41) found bullocks the medium of exchange in Central Africa in 1823.

† Gen. xxxiii., 19., marg.

‡ Du Chaillu, vol. i., p. 380.

§ Wilkinson, vol. ii., p. 149.

‖ Job xlii., 11.

¶ Layard, vol. ii., p. 318, note.

pecially as the edges of nearly all are scraped by the Jews, or their substance is diminished with a strong solution of aqua fortis. This acts as a great hinderance to honest commercial transactions, and has given rise to a large class of people called "sarafs," or money-changers, to be found at fairs and in all commercial places, who not only exchange foreign or little-known money for that which is current in the country, but are also addicted to all manner of usury and extortion. The money-changers whose tables our Lord overturned must have belonged to a similar class of people, for the occurrence took place during Passover week, when a great fair was held at Jerusalem in connection with this principal festival of the Jews.*

These sarafs are the chief money-lenders and usurers of the country, and most unmercifully do they ply their trade. The Mosaic law forbade a Hebrew's taking interest of his own brethren, so that money-lending was made an act of charity.† Our Lord renewed the injunction in the same sense, and carried it yet farther.‡ In Nehemiah's time the Jewish sarafs so oppressed their poor brethren that he compelled them to receive no more than twelve per cent. interest.§ Mohammed also forbade the taking of interest, and it can not be legally collected; but his followers get over the difficulty by means of a receipt for a sum so much larger than the loan as to cover the interest. Moreover, money is never lent without a pledge,‖ usually jewelry, which is of greater value than the sum borrowed, but can not be disposed of without the consent of the owner. Money can rarely be had now for less than twelve per cent. a year. It is often at twenty-four per cent., but more commonly at eighteen per cent.¶ The sarafs often acquire great wealth, those especially who transact business for the chief pashas of the capital and the governors of the provinces. The most noted in our day was Jezaïrly Mugurdich, an Armenian, of wealth untold, who lived in a degree of splendor surpassing that of the highest dignitaries of the state. The bedstead on which he slept cost five thousand dollars; he built a country-seat upon the Bosphorus for fifteen million dollars; and hired the customs for two million five hundred thousand dollars,

* Matt. xxi., 12. † Deut. xxiii., 19, 20. ‡ Luke vi., 34.
§ Neh. v. ‖ Deut. xxiv., 6. ¶ Perkins, p. 151.

cash down. He was thought to be worth from forty-five to sixty millions, yet, under the arbitrary government of Turkey, having incurred the displeasure of a profligate but highly connected pasha, he in a few months lost all he possessed, and was cast into prison, where he languished and finally died. His widow was seen not long after in the market of Balookly, at Constantinople, buying carobs (husks)* as a relish.

We have already mentioned that there are also fairs connected with yearly gatherings for religious purposes at favorite shrines and temples. The heathen anciently held religious festivals at all their chief temples in honor of the gods therein worshiped, and, as the gathered multitudes must needs be fed, a market was kept for their accommodation, which in process of time came to be a fair for the exchange of the products of different districts. This doubtless occurred also at Shiloh, and afterward at Jerusalem, during the yearly festivals ordered by the law of Moses,† and the gathering on several occasions is said to have been very great.‡ Every house was crowded, all the neighboring villas and villages were full, and booths and tents were set up in the open places (meïdans) of the city, in all the surrounding valleys, and upon the hill-sides to the very summit of Olivet.§ Many khans (inns) were erected for the accommodation of these temporary guests. Such a khan, or caravanseraÿ, seems to have been built by Chimham, the son of Barzillai,‖ on the outskirts of Bethlehem, both for the accommodation of the Passover gatherings, and as the first stage on the road toward Egypt;¶ and this was the spot chosen by Divine Providence for the birth of the Saviour of the world.**

There are at the present day many Christian churches where yearly festivals are observed, the chief of which is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. Crowds of pilgrims gather on these occasions to visit the shrine of the saint whose relics are the attraction of the place. They hope in this way to propitiate his favor, oftentimes to be healed of some incurable malady. This superstition exists among all sects alike;

* Luke xv., 16.
† Exod. xxiii., 17.
‡ 1 Kings viii., 65, 66; 2 Kings xxiii., 22.
§ Luke xxi., 37.
‖ 2 Sam. xix., 37, 38.
¶ Jer. xli., 17.
** Luke ii., 7; Stanley, "Jewish Church," vol. ii., p. 201.

for the tekkehs of the Kuzulbashes contain the tombs of their saints; the Yezidies yearly gather at the shrine of Sheikh Adi; and the Persians and Turks crowd around the graves of Hosein, Fatima, and other favorite saints. All such occasions are improved by the merchants, who travel from one shrine to another, combining a handsome worldly profit with the achievement of a meritorious religious performance.

But by far the most important gathering of this sort, both numerically and commercially, is the pilgrimage to Mecca, in Arabia, a very ancient institution, destroyed by Mohammed when he profaned its temple by casting out the idols, but restored again in connection with the faith he substituted.* Here meet the representatives of the most distant portions of the Muslim world, and exchange the products of their respective countries, which would otherwise seek for themselves new channels, or, most probably, altogether cease to flow. The long line of the caravan, mostly composed of camels, with an escort of horsemen for defense against a foe, like a fleet of merchantmen guarded by a convoy of ships of war, winds along the same path through the Desert, which has been trodden during the last four thousand years. The caravan from Cairo alone contains fifteen thousand camels, besides other animals.† Their progress is very slow, for, in case of an accident occurring—and they are frequent—the whole caravan must stop and wait. The caravan from Morocco is an entire year on the way to Mecca.‡ The Jews were four months going from Babylon to Jerusalem; but most of their beasts were asses, and the people went chiefly on foot.§

Despite the facilities afforded by the many steamers which now ply in the Mediterranean, the Emir Haj journeys by land all the way from Constantinople to Mecca, picking up pilgrims as he goes. The great numbers which compose these caravans save them from some of the inconveniences and dangers incident on travels in the East. A large supply of provisions must, however, be carried, not only when passing over uninhabited regions, but even where villages occur along the route, as they are too poor to furnish sustenance for such a multitude.

* Crichton, "Arabia," vol. i., p. 277; Garmier, "Vie de Mohammed."
† Thevenot, part i., p. 150. ‡ Bruce, vol. i., introd., pp. 39, 40.
§ Ezra viii.

Water, too, is often scarce, and must be conveyed in leather bags. A caravan is always exposed, especially when its numbers are few, to attacks from highway robbers. When it stops in dangerous places for the night no tents are pitched, for fear of observation, but each one arranges his goods so as best to guard them by lying among them. The bread they eat is made into dough and roasted on coals, or baked in an extemporized oven dug in the ground.*

The mode of reckoning distance by the *hour* is now universally adopted in Turkey. It consists of the space ordinarily traversed by a good walker on foot, and varies from three to four miles; hence it differs in length according to the nature of the country. The Persians have the same measure, but it is the distance which a smart horse can walk in an hour, or about four miles and a half. They still call it *fursakh*, which is the same as the *parasang* of Xenophon's "Anabasis,"† equal to four English miles. It would seem, therefore, that the measure of distance by the hour became general throughout the country at least as early as the Persian empire (B.C. 500). It was somewhat set aside by the Greeks and Romans, but re-established by the Saracens, who could use no other measure in the desert wastes. Reckoning by *day's journeys* also still prevails, and is yet more indefinite than the hour, since it depends not only on the condition of the road, but also upon the places where caravans are in the habit of stopping for the night.‡

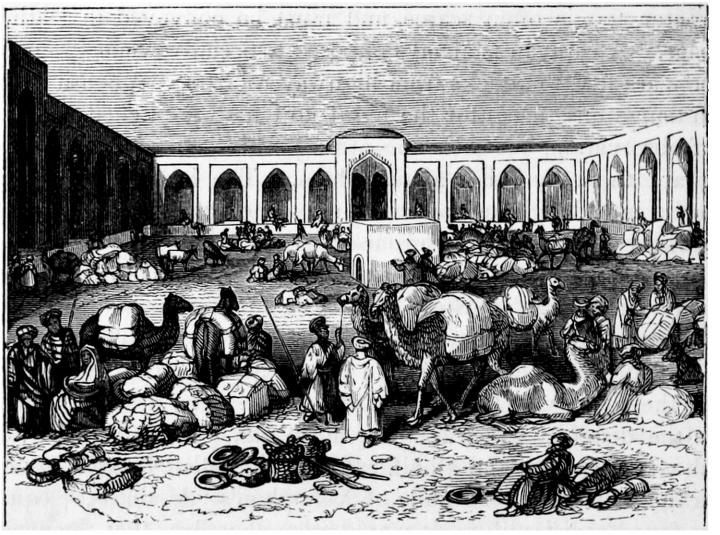
The night shelter best adapted to Oriental travelers, and specially intended for their accommodation and comfort, is the caravanseraÿ—literally, *the caravan-house.* It is called a khan (from *khaneh*, a house) when built in a city, and is never known in many districts by any other name. These buildings are not found at the end of every day's journey. The traveler must often put up at a little café, in a village stable, or even on the roadside. But he is best satisfied with the caravanseraÿ, whether it stands alone by the way, as is often the case, or is erected in a city or a village. These structures vary in size and material, and are made of mud-bricks and wood, or of masonry—

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* Tavernier, p. 62.

† Perkins, p. 166, note.

‡ Exod. iii., 18; Numb. xi., 31; Luke ii., 44.



Interior of a Caravanseraÿ, or Inn. (Luke ii., 7.)

sometimes even of hewn stone; but the form is essentially the same, consisting of a square or oblong court, with one or two stories of rooms built around it. There is a large gate in the middle of one of the sides, which is closed at night with two heavy folding-doors, adjoining which, as well as over it, are the most desirable and expensive rooms. A gallery often runs all around the court, and there is usually in the centre of the latter a fountain with a tank, or a well with troughs. Here the traveler is furnished with an empty room for a very small sum; and the inn-keeper is often able to provide food both for man and beast. The stables are usually situated opposite the entrance gate. They are divided into compartments or rooms, each of which has a small platform, where the muleteers or grooms sleep, in order to watch over their horses and other animals. Many people prefer to lodge here in winter, the presence of the beasts making it the warmest part of the building, except where fire is used. Troughs or mangers are built against the walls, or the animals are fed from the bag. No distinction is made among travelers on account of their rank or wealth; no one may take another man's room; for the *khanjy* strictly adheres to the rule, "first come, first served."

This is the only kind of "inn" known in the East at the

present day; and it so well agrees with all the habits of the people, and with their ideas of comfort and independence, that we can not believe any other fashion or style has ever prevailed to any extent in those lands. Caravanseraÿs are alluded to in the Scriptures in a manner that leaves little doubt upon the question of their identity.* The foregoing explanations will serve to correct some of the current misapprehensions respecting the birth of Him who, when "he came unto his own, his own received him not;" and who, though Lord of the Universe, was cradled in a manger, and "had not where to lay his head."†

It would be no easy task to sum up, in a few sentences, the result of the investigations or statements contained in the second part of this work, as we did at the close of the first part; for the material differences pointed out in the latter between the condition of Bible lands in ancient and modern times can easily be epitomized and summarily expressed; whereas customs which have a historical origin can not so readily be classified. The sketch here drawn will, however, it is believed, lead the reader to conclude that the East of the present day bears so close a resemblance to that of ancient times that it may well be used as its faithful commentary. And this becomes clearer when we enlarge our field of observation, as in the present work, so as to embrace the entire circle of the lands of the Bible, wherein are laid the various scenes it describes. Had we confined ourselves to the limits of Palestine, as has been done by most writers before us, or had we included Syria and Egypt only, we could have studied such customs alone as have been preserved by Arabic-speaking races. By considering all Bible lands a proper field for investigation, wherein we could fairly hunt for all the old Bible customs—whether in person, or through the observations of other travelers—many valuable illustrations have been secured which would otherwise have been lost. Our work is now done; but before taking leave of the reader, his attention must be called to a few weighty suggestions by way of conclusion.

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* Gen. xliii., 21; Exod. iv., 24; Luke x., 34. † Luke ii., 7, 16.

And first: the study of Oriental customs is of far greater importance to a student of the Bible than most people imagine. A traveler often endures great hardships and runs still greater risks, stimulated by the most laudable enthusiasm, in order to contemplate some spot having a more or less authentic connection with an important historical event, or for the purpose of visiting a ruin of more or less uncertain origin, that he may more vividly realize some of the scenes described in the Scriptures. He finally reaches the end of his long and arduous pilgrimage, and is rewarded by the contemplation of the object of his search. But as he gazes upon the dumb witnesses of the past, there stands beside him a living fragment of that same past, a representative of the very men who enacted those interesting scenes—a lineal descendant, it may be, of Abraham, or of David, of one of the apostles or protomartyrs. His face and form are perhaps the very photograph of his ancestor; his garb, his manners, the dialect he speaks, are fac-similes of those delineated in Bible story. Yet our traveler heeds him not: he turns from him with the exclamation, "What a queer-looking fellow!" and goes away satisfied, bearing home as a precious prize the fragment of a column, perhaps the nose of a statue, which is to figure on his parlor mantel or étagère for the admiration of his gaping visitors. Some travelers excuse themselves by pleading ignorance of the language; but the excuse is insufficient. And many who are familiar with Oriental tongues, or have access to an interpreter, seem only anxious to impress "the natives" with a conviction of their own superiority. These things ought not so to be. Both parties would improve by unprejudiced intercourse: the Occidental would be instructed, and his faith be strengthened by studying the manners of his Oriental brother, no less than the latter would improve by an acquaintance with what the former claims to be a higher refinement and more perfect civilization.

The late Professor Stewart, of the Andover Theological Seminary, once made a remark in our hearing, which illustrates both the reach of his mind and the importance of the subject treated in these pages. A member of the class in Exegesis inquired of the learned professor whether he thought the time was likely ever to come when men would perfectly under-

stand every thing contained in the Bible. He replied, "I know not whether such a time will ever come; but if it should, that most desirable end will be attained in the lands where the Bible was written, and by natives of those lands." The remark produced a deep impression on our mind, and essentially affected the studies of a lifetime.

Another important inference may be drawn from the facts contained in the foregoing pages: they furnish an overwhelming argument for the authenticity of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We have already pointed out this argument with reference to the topography of the Scriptures (see page 32). It is even stronger when applied to the manners and customs of the people, especially to such as are not derived from the climate and natural products of the country, but are of a more ephemeral character. There is evidence on every page of the Bible that it was written in Western Asia, and by Asiatics, about the time claimed therein. It could have been penned nowhere else, and by no other people. So many minute and, in themselves considered, insignificant circumstances are woven into the narrative as to make deceit or imposture an utter impossibility. Let an Occidental take up any Bible narrative, and attempt to reproduce it in his own words with an equal degree of minuteness, and before many minutes an Oriental audience would be sure to show unmistakable signs of mirth on account of the incongruity of some of his details. If he does not, like the colored preacher, speak of Martha as "busy frying fritters," he can not well avoid, in some other way, showing the difference which exists between the habits of the West and those of the East. There is very much in the Bible which an Occidental can not understand without explanation, but which is perfectly plain to an Oriental. Now all these facts are incontrovertible proofs that the Scriptures were written by Orientals. So there is abundant evidence that they lived at the periods claimed. This fact is always betrayed by allusions to historical events, to useful inventions and discoveries, and by the dialect employed; for the languages of men are continually undergoing slow but sure changes, in proportion to the alteration in their circumstances, and their intercourse with other nations. And we add that, when we consider the many mistakes as to facts contained in the most care-

fully written histories and narratives, and notice, at the same time, the perfect freedom of the Bible from all such mistakes, although it is a voluminous and extremely varied compilation, and many of its writers were illiterate men, we can not avoid the conclusion that we have in the present case something beyond mere authenticity. We see most unmistakable evidence that the authors of the Bible were guided and controlled in their work by the special influence of that Spirit which alone can never err. This is inspiration: it is all that is required to render that book infallible in its utterances, though more than this must necessarily be claimed and conceded for all such portions as lie beyond the range of human knowledge, and require a more direct or a more perfect revelation. We conclude, therefore, that the correspondence between the manners of the modern East and the statements and allusions of Scripture constitute an important argument, not only for their authenticity, but also for their inspiration.

There is yet another topic which can not fail to suggest itself to the mind, after contemplating the picture of the present social and religious condition of the lands of the Bible: it is the question of their regeneration—the inquiry respecting the probability of their ever resuming that high rank among the nations of the earth to which their antecedents fairly entitle them.

Some good people feel very sanguine on this subject. They base their conviction on their own interpretation of the "sure word of prophecy." The effect of this feeling when indulged exclusively is, we believe, in the majority of cases, to make people wait and do nothing. The word "prophecy," just quoted from 2 Peter i., 19–21, is evidently used by the apostle according to its more common Biblical acceptation, as synonymous with *inspiration*.* The cases are few in which the Holy Spirit intended distinctly and particularly to make known future events. Prophecies of the future are more or less of the nature of riddles; they are meant to be fully understood only after their fulfillment. In the discussion of a question like the present, we are safest in not placing our chief reliance upon "doubtful interpretations" of prophecies which men are

* Stanley, "Jewish Church," vol. i., p. 502, etc.

liable to "hear and not understand,* but rather in those "signs of the times" which it is folly "not to discern."†

It needs no great penetration to perceive that the religious systems now prevalent in the East have grown old, and have lost their power and influence over their votaries, who give unequivocal signs of being more and more attracted toward the ideas and views generally regarded as belonging to the body of doctrines denominated Evangelical Christianity. Muslims, even the proudest, confess that Islam is practically dead; no sincere believer is left; its votaries conform to its rites without zeal or conviction, and even these are neglected; few observe the Ramazan; and fewer still become hajies. The members of the old Oriental churches too have, for the most part, become emancipated from the superstitious veneration of antiquated and now unmeaning forms. As a highly respectable and intelligent Armenian priest lately expressed it: "There is no one left to keep the fasts, or to worship the mass, the cross, the relics, or the pictures—no one to kiss, as formerly, the hand of the priest, to confess to him, or to have faith in, or spend money upon any thing of the kind." And the partisans of still older systems adhere to what may be called an unmeaning legacy, only through the pressure of persecution. Evangelical Christianity, on the other hand, besides the charm of novelty and the hopes excited by an untried system—besides the fact that it possesses the very excellences which the others are felt to lack, and is free from the very defects they glaringly possess—comes to them as the faith of the most highly civilized, prosperous, powerful, and free peoples of the earth. Twenty-five years ago, popery was making rapid strides in Turkey, owing to the supposed political supremacy of popish countries; but recent history has left the impression that the system possesses more apparent than real strength; and those who have tried it are now abandoning it, because they find that it differs in no essential respect from the effete forms of Oriental Christianity.

It is preposterous to suppose that there exists in the Oriental mind any thing like a natural bent opposed to evangelical religion, rendering difficult its introduction, or its complete tri-

* Luke viii., 10. † Matt. xvi., 3.

umph among them. The purest form of Christianity originated in the East, where it was once diffused and held a sway probably unsurpassed at any period in any land. And as for ecclesiastical organization, it should be remembered that every Christian sect claims its peculiar form to have been practiced, first of all, in Western Asia, during the apostolic age, and is therefore bound to believe that its own peculiar system can easily be naturalized again in the land of its birth. Moreover, the Oriental Christians have been brought up under the influence of Christian ideas and institutions; they have a Christianized language, a Christian literature; they need but to be reformed, as our fathers were three hundred years ago, and their history will find its parallel not in the conversion of India or the isles of the Pacific, but rather in the reformation of Germany, Switzerland, or Scotland.

A further argument for the regeneration of the East is found in the progress already made in that direction during the last half century, which has deeply affected every class and every department of political and social life. We have already pointed out some of the mistakes made by the professed political friends of Turkey. These have not prevented, though they have vastly impeded, her progress. A great improvement has also taken place through the adoption on the part of many of a higher scale of morality, and a purer standard of faith. Christianity has been revived and brought back to its original simplicity, and something of its apostolic purity, not only among the twenty thousand professed Protestants, but also, though to an inferior degree, among the millions who desire to reform their ancient ecclesiastical organizations without abandoning them. And education has made most rapid advances among all classes. The wonderful spread of evangelical views during the last forty years is a pledge of the readiness of the Oriental mind to receive them, as well as a token of their future prevalence; and we include every religious sect in this statement, though the nominal Christians naturally take the lead, being better prepared for the change.

Evangelical Christian missions have contributed greatly to this result; but what has distinguished the work from like improvements in heathen lands, and has assimilated it to the Reformation of the sixteenth century, is the fact that it was brought

about in great measure by the distribution of the Scriptures, without note or comment. The minds of men were moved, by an invisible agency, almost simultaneously throughout the country, to inquire after religious truths, and to compare their faith with the Bible standard. The result could not be doubtful. As was the case with the Jews of Berea, who were in the same state of mind and pursued the same course, "many believed."* Thousands have imbibed the spirit of apostolic Christianity, and many have been raised among the people to preach its doctrines with eloquence and power to their own countrymen.

There are many hopeful signs of the speedy regeneration of some of the most influential nations that now dwell in the lands of the Bible. There are also adverse circumstances, which should not discourage, but rather incite us to labor for their removal, and to struggle the more manfully for the good cause. There is a providence, all-wise and beneficent, which "sees the end from the beginning," and will cause every obstacle to be removed in its own good time. It is our conviction that the Christian religion, in its purity, will, at no distant day, prevail throughout the lands of the Bible, bringing to its populations the blessings of a higher civilization than they ever enjoyed before, together with fertility to their wasted lands, the free enjoyment of the fruits of their industry, secured by a good government, and, above all these, the blessing of the Almighty.

* Acts xvii., 11, 12.

APPENDIX I.

ORIENTAL PROVERBS.*

[*Furnished mostly by my excellent and talented Armenian friend, Doctor Hagopos J. Giragosian, now of Constantinople. Most of these Proverbs contain a play upon words: we can only give the sense.*]

1. One hand is a mirror of the other.
2. It is easy to mount a little donkey.
3. Speak one word while you listen to a thousand.
4. Righteous gains make the pot boil.
5. A man is blind to his own shameful deeds.
6. Every trouble is a warning.
7. Blame is the servant's portion, but to the master belongs forgiveness.
8. A man's chicken looks to his neighbor a goose.
9. The rat can not squeeze through his hole, because he has tied a broom to his tail. (Said of a proud man.)
10. Blood is not washed out with blood, but with water.
11. Once in forty years I set out to steal, and then the moon shone all night. (Bad luck.)
12. To the crazy, every day is a holiday.
13. When I get my new shoes, then is my holiday.
14. The two ends of the collar come short. (Not to make the "ends meet.")
15. The tortoise struts on clogs. (The incompetent are promoted.)
16. The rider on the lame donkey would fain join the caravan.
17. I know the hog I pasture.
18. The pot has rolled and found its cover. (A good match.)
19. What he cooks in the saucepan, he eats in its cover. (A miser.)
20. His hand is in the pot, but his eye on the window. (He is absent-minded.)
21. The nightingale was shut up in a golden cage, but she still cried, "My home! my home!"
22. They made the Koord a Bey, and the first thing he did was to kill his own father.
23. One flower does not make a summer.
24. The candle shines not upon what lies beneath it. (Generosity to strangers alone.)
25. To strangers the candle, and to me the candlestick. (The same.)
26. A thousand friends are few, and one enemy far too many.
27. Two captains in one ship will surely sink her.
28. Buy not the chestnut horse, sell the black, feed the gray, and ride the bay.
29. The boot does the squeaking, but the money does the work.

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* See page 388.

30. Play with the hands is boorish play. (*Jeu de mains, jeu de vilains.*)
31. Mountains never meet, but a man meets a man. (Said on parting.)
32. The stork spends its time clattering with its bill. (Said of a braggart.)
33. He that strikes not his daughter will strike his own knees. (*I. e.*, in mourning.)
34. He that is not equal to whip his donkey whips the saddle.
35. A hungry bear will not dance.
36. False words and false money come from a false man.
37. The fox ends by getting into the furrier's shop.
38. Knife wounds heal, but not so those produced by a word.
39. The heart is a crystal palace—once broken, it can never be mended.
40. When it thunders many call upon God.
41. Bitter cures bitterness, and cold water the colic. (*Similia similibus curantur.*)
42. Brothers were created side by side, but their purses far apart.
43. With patience sour grapes become sweetmeat, and mulberry-leaves turn to satin.
44. Eyes that are not seen are soon forgotten.
45. Do not take every old gray-beard for your father.
46. He who loves the rose accepts also its thorn.
47. Thanks to the sweet-basil, the pot gets watered.
48. Though the sweet-basil dries up, it loses not its fragrance.
49. A beggar being offered a cucumber refused it, saying, "It is crooked."
50. After the cart is broken down, there are many to show the way.
51. If the Judge be your enemy, God help you!
52. Love him who loves you, though he be a bad man; love not him that loves you, simply for his being Sultan of Egypt.
53. An old friend can not become an enemy.
54. What shall a fool do with advice, or a negro with soap.
55. Stretch yourself according to your coverlet.
56. When a sheep can not be had, a goat is called "My Lord Abdul Rahman."
57. Do not take off your shoes before you see the river.
58. At sight of a glow-worm, the timid cry, "Fire!"
59. He who speaks out all he likes has to hear what he does not like.
60. Behind this mountain lies a hope.
61. Strong vinegar corrodes the vessel which contains it. (Said of a passionate man.)
62. The tree is large, but hollow within.
63. He who has received a goose should not be chary of a chicken.
64. A fly is nothing, but it spoils the appetite.
65. To one whose beard was on fire, another said: "Here! let me light my pipe!"
66. The goat thinks of his life at stake, but the butcher only of the grease.
67. The night is in travail, but who can tell what it will bring forth?
68. Even a Circassian can make a spoon; but the handle is not straight.
69. Whoso serves at the tekkeh (or mosk) eats of its soup.
70. What makes a camel rush down a steep place, is a tuft of green grass.
71. Dig not a pit for others, lest one be dug for you.
72. If two hearts are one, a straw-bin becomes a palace.
73. Brass always succeeds, provided its garb offend not.
74. Without work there is no food.
75. Even the chicken, after drinking, looks up to heaven.

76. Even a cupful of bitter coffee lays one under obligation.
77. A cock which crows unseasonably has his throat cut.
78. Profit and loss are partners in business.
79. Wherever there is night, there also is day.
80. Better give a wide berth to a dog than drive him out of your path.
81. Better than to whip a child is to make him dread it.
82. Money is the fuel of the soul.
83. Money acquires money, but money makes not a man.
84. After the torrent has gone by, there remains—sand. (Said of a boisterous braggart.)
85. Or ever his mother's thread was spun, he sold it.
86. Where there is a big mosk, a man should not go to a small tekkeh (chapel).
87. When you go over a bridge, make friends even with the devil.
88. If you can pull, pull away; if not, stand aside.
89. He that has never served is not fit to rule.
90. It is not he who has lived long that is wise, but he that has traveled much.
91. Intelligence lies not in the years, but in the head.
92. The insane asylum lies underneath. (A free tongue.)
93. Than the camel there is a larger—the elephant. (Said of a boaster.)
94. Expect not of the ant more than its ability.
95. Every one sings the praises of him in whose cart he is riding.
96. Open not your sail to every wind.
97. A good ship makes a direct voyage. (Said of a skillful artisan's work.)
98. He who would steal a minareh must first prepare a hiding-place for it.
99. The camel being asked, "Why is your neck so crooked?" replied, "What part of me is straight?"
100. Wait patiently—as the sparrow waits on the barley-man.
101. At the barking of a dog the caravan does not break up.
102. Water goes to rest, but an enemy never.
103. If you'll cook the meal with words, I'll promise an ocean of butter.
104. Water-jars are broken on the way to the fountain.
105. A coverlet is never burned for the sake of one flea.
106. The house indeed was burned, but the rats were also destroyed.
107. When a Jew fails, he pores over the old accounts.
108. He who seeks to part disputants is sure to get the blows.
109. He who fears the sparrows abstains from sowing corn.
110. When a man takes a crow for his leader, his mouth must ever be full of carrion.
111. Whoso grudges the horseshoe loses his horse.
112. When the hands have washed each other, then they both wash the face.
113. A soft speech drives a snake out of his hole, and sweet words drive a lie from the tongue.
114. One eats more bread by dipping it in honey than in vinegar.
115. The donkey, vexed with the cock, called him a blockhead.
116. Knowledge is a tree whose root is bitter, but its fruit sweet.
117. A single hour may bring to pass what years had failed to accomplish.
118. Better ten in the hand than a thousand by-and-by.
119. The passage of a rat is nothing, but it soon becomes a thoroughfare.
120. The apple and the pomegranate trees disputed which was the fairer, when the thistle exclaimed, "Brethren, let us not quarrel!"

121. He that has lost his eyes cares no more for his spectacles.

122. A fool cast a stone into a well which forty men could not draw out again.

123. Said the crab, "Daughter, why do you walk crooked?" "Mother," replied the other, "show me how to go straight."

124. The judge who takes five cucumbers as a bribe, will admit any evidence for ten beds of melons.

APPENDIX II.*

[*Translation of an Arab Song on the Death of Boo Khaloom, from Denham and Clapperton*, vol. ii., p. 467.]

"Oh! trust not to the gun and the sword! The spear of the unbeliever prevails!

"Boo Khaloom, the good and the brave, has fallen! Who shall be safe? Even as the moon among the little stars, so was Boo Khaloom among men! Where shall Fezzan now look for her protector? Men hang their heads in sorrow, while women their hands, rending the air with their cries! As a shepherd is to his flock, so was Boo Khaloom to Fezzan!

"Give him songs! Give him music! What words can equal his praise! His heart was as large as the desert! His coffers were like the rich overflowings from the udder of the she-camel, comforting and nourishing those around him!

"Even as the flowers without rain perish in the field, so will Fezzaniers droop; for Boo Khaloom returns no more!

"His body lies in the land of the heathen! The poisoned arrow of the unbeliever prevails!

"Oh! trust not to the gun and the sword! the spear of the heathen conquers! Boo Khaloom, the good and the brave, has fallen! Who shall now be safe?"

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* See page 386.

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